

IRA bomb threatens week of rail disruption

By Stewart Tandler and Bill Frost

COMMUTER train services on one of the main lines into London could be disrupted for up to a week after a small bomb exploded yesterday by the track in south London and knocked out signalling equipment. A slow service was restored and the service will be restricted for days.

Commander George Churchill-Coleman, head of Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist branch, said the bomb was the work of the IRA. The attack near Wandsworth Bridge station is the 11th on railway lines or trains in the present bombing campaign.

Yesterday's bomb, thought to be under a pound of explosive, was in an electrical signalling cabinet 400 yards from Wandsworth Common station. It exploded just after 7am causing little damage. Westminster hospital received a warning of a bomb at the station at 6.28am and the area had been cleared.

Trains were diverted from Victoria to London Bridge during the incident. Some services will continue to run to and from London Bridge for the time being.

Locals were woken by what one called a tremendous explosion from the trackside junction box close to a footbridge. There was no apparent damage to the lines but the box was destroyed and signalling circuitry and other debris was scattered over the track. Police sealed off the common and closed roads and searched the track and the area around the footbridge.

Chris Jago, Network SouthEast divisional director, said the telephone warning had said that the bomb was at Wandsworth Common station. In fact the device had been planted half a mile up the line.

"We may have more problems than we first thought," Mr Jago said. "However, using hand signalling we should be able to allow four trains along this line each hour. Cables have been ripped up by the blast and there is substantial damage which will take more than a week to repair."

At peak times more than 20 trains an hour use the line's four tracks. Mr Jago said: "The blast has completely destroyed a signalling cupboard and damaged two others too badly to keep them working."

He said there would be a further security review as a result of the attack. "Our security is at a very high level now anyway," he added. He admitted that little could be done about securing isolated stretches of track.

Mackay tipped to step down

By Frances Gibb
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

SPECULATION is mounting in legal circles that Lord Mackay of Clashfern, the Lord Chancellor, would step down in the aftermath of an election victory by the Conservatives, after nearly five years as head of the judiciary and Speaker of the House of Lords.

Lord Mackay, who will be 65 in July, is understood to wish to spend more time with his wife and family and to return to Edinburgh. It is thought that he might step down within two or three months of the Conservatives winning the election.

The leading contenders to succeed him if the Conservatives win are Sir Geoffrey Howe, QC, (although he is also tipped to be governor of Hong Kong) and Sir Patrick Mayhew, QC, currently Attorney-General. Another possibility would be a senior judge, such as Lord Justice Woolf. If Labour wins, front-runners are Lord Irvine of Lairg and Peter Archer, QC.



Taking the strain: weary passengers waiting at Liverpool Street station after the disruption caused by the bomb, and the junction box destroyed in the explosion near Wandsworth Common station

Health regions vow target will be met

By Jeremy Laurance and Ray Clancy

THIRTEEN of the 14 English health regions say that they expect to have treated all patients who have been on hospital waiting lists for more than two years by the government's deadline of the end of this month.

A survey by *The Times* suggests that, with three weeks to go, only a handful of patients will remain to be treated after the deadline in these regions.

The exception is North East Thames, which is negotiating a three-month extension to the end of June for its plastic surgery patients. At the end of January, North East Thames had 2,160 patients who had waited over two years for plastic surgery.

Under the patient's charter, the government guarantees that no patient will have to wait longer than two years for treatment after 31 March 1992.

At the end of January, the number waiting two years stood at just over 20,000, down from 50,000 in March 1991. Hospitals have been treating record numbers of patients from their two-year lists by holding extra clinics at evenings and weekends.

Of the regions with more than 1,000 people on the two-year waiting list at the end of January, South Western, with 1,344 on its books, said these would be cleared by March.

South East Thames (2,487 patients) said that "virtually all" patients have been given admission dates before the end of March; and Oxford (1,606 patients) said that all but 56, who had said a date for treatment before March, were expected to be treated.

North West Thames (2,395 patients) said that 97 per cent had been given admission dates before March 31; and West Midlands (2,232 patients) expected to hit the target deadline.

Lack of care 'contributed to deaths of patients'

A LACK of support for seven mentally ill men discharged from psychiatric hospitals into the community in Oxford contributed to their deaths, an independent enquiry says today.

The patients were nearly all suffering from major psychosis. Three took their own lives and an open verdict was recorded by the coroner on the four others.

Six of them, who died between July 1990 and July 1991, had just been or were about to be moved from the Warneford or Littlemore hospitals. Sustained efforts were made to find the most suitable placements "but the right arrangement was not always available and care plans did not always meet the situation", the enquiry report says.

Four were discharged, or about to be discharged, to "isolated individual accommodation which would appear to have been a major factor contributing to the final phase for them".

Paul Merrill, aged 24, hanged himself in his room at Littlemore hospital last March with his belt. After several months in the hospital he had been discharged to live in a housing association flat but had returned to Littlemore on a voluntary basis. He had been accepted to read geography at Newcastle University but had been diagnosed as schizophrenic.

Paul McPherson, aged 22, and also diagnosed schizophrenic, was found dead in the garage at his parents' home while on Christmas leave from Littlemore. He had taken a large quantity of paracetamol. In another case, Tristan Watkins, aged 39, a voluntary patient at Warneford, was found drowned last July while off hospital premises.

Shortage of resources increased the pressure to discharge patients and the "excellent" after-care policy was not always strictly followed, says the report, by Vivienne Rubinstein, a lay member of Oxfordshire regional health authority. Staff were generous in their commitment but "several times in the more doctors apologise for not being able to take a particular patient because of the pressure on their facilities".

More sheltered housing with support from community staff was needed, the report says, and more; admission beds should be opened so that people can be more readily admitted to hospital when necessary and discharges can be more gradual.

An additional internal review of the care provided by the hospitals, which considered an extra death and a

suicide attempt not covered by the enquiry, also highlighted the shortage of admission beds. The level of nursing staff was "barely adequate", the review by Professor Gethin Morgan of Bristol University says.

Oxfordshire health authority said that it had allocated an extra £300,000 to hire more nurses and open more admission beds. The authority said that its discharge policy "will be developed further" and extra sheltered accommodation would be provided "when resources allow".

Ian Bynoe, legal director of Mind, said: "Oxfordshire's psychiatric services fail to meet acceptable standards of humane and effective care. Mrs Rubinstein's criticisms reveal a hospital-based service still largely institutional and often limited in the individual and personal help it can offer."

The father of one of the men who died accused the hospital authority of deviousness in holding a press conference on the report on Budget day. Maurice Fitzmaurice, of Boars Hill, Oxford, whose 18-year-old son threw himself to his death from the top of a multi-storey car park, said the authority had produced a damage limitation exercise.

"Families and the public want to see full findings and know how shortcomings in the 12 areas of recommendation contributed to the tragic deaths of our loved ones," he said.

First solicitor to head fraud office

By Frances Gibb, Legal Correspondent

GEORGE Staple, a City solicitor with the country's biggest law firm, Clifford Chance, and treasurer of the Law Society, has been appointed the next director of the Serious Fraud Office, the first solicitor to hold the post.

Mr Staple, aged 51, who faces the task of reforming the way the legal system handles complex fraud, succeeds Barbara Mills, QC, appointed the next Director of Public Prosecutions. He takes up the post on April 21. He is little known outside legal circles except in his role as solicitor for the accountants Price Waterhouse, advising the four sequestrators of the miners' assets in 1985 to 1986 throughout the strike.

Philip Ely, president of the Law Society, said it was an inspired choice. "I am delighted that a solicitor has been appointed to this crucial position. He will bring to it a great depth of commercial and litigation experience."

Nigel Fox Bassett, senior partner at Clifford Chance, said the firm was delighted at the appointment, although sorry to lose one of its senior litigation partners. "He has all the right qualities for this very demanding job," Mr Fox Bassett said. "He is very likeable and he has sound judgment and a cool head. He combines firmness of approach with being fair, and that should all stand him in good stead."

Mr Staple, who is a legal assessor to the Stock Exchange Disciplinary Committee and a companies act inspector, has a long background in City litigation and

white collar crime. He is a fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators and from 1987 to 1991 was chairman of the Authorisation and Disciplinary Tribunal of the Securities Association. He is a chairman of the authorisation and disciplinary appeal tribunal of the Securities and Futures Authority.

He has been on the Law Society council since 1986 and served on various committees including its insolvency casework committee and its international committee.

Mr Staple's appointment, after open advertisement and interviews, is one of the most senior legal posts to be chosen in this way and was particularly welcomed as a boost to solicitors. Mr Ely said he hoped more solicitors would be appointed to "these important public and judicial posts" and that a "more open system of appointment will now continue".

List opens to fight Amos seat

By Peter Davenport

TORY party officers in the Northumberland constituency of Alan Amos, the MP who resigned after being cautioned by police for alleged indecency with another man, said yesterday they expected to announce the name of their new candidate within two weeks.

The market town of Hexham is the safest Conservative seat in the North-East, with a majority of 8,066 over the Liberals in 1987, and there is expected to be a rush of applications, which have to be with the constituency party by the weekend. They will be studied by the 12-strong selection committee which will draw up a short list for interviews. Three potential candidates will then be presented to the executive council who will choose the person to fight the seat.

Yesterday Rosemary Barker, chairman of Hexham Conservative Association, said the party was not panicking and insisted that the incident would not do any long term damage. She said: "We hope to complete the whole process by the end of next week. We are not in chaos as the headlines suggest. We are all calm and working steadily through this. We have a very strong team and we can cope."

Mr Amos, a bachelor aged 39, announced his resignation on Monday after it was disclosed that he and another man were cautioned by police but not charged over the incident at on Hampstead Heath, north London.

Death fall

A refugee who fled Iraq after being tortured in military prisons may have jumped to his death from a tower block in Acton, west London, because of Home Office delays over his application to stay in Britain. Dr John Burton, the Hammersmith coroner, was told yesterday. He adjourned the inquest on Shant Yousif Petrossian, aged 26, an Armenian, until later this month.

Weapons deal

Britain has decided to stay a partner in a multi-billion pound European anti-tank weapon programme, despite previous serious misgivings. Last autumn, Britain warned its French and German partners that it might pull out. The new, long-range Trigat weapon came under scrutiny during the government's Options for Change defence review and there were suggestions that it be scrapped.

Parliament today

Commons (2.30): Questions: Trade and Industry. Continuation of debate on the Budget.
Lords (2.30): Liberal Democrat debates on constitutional reform and on Britain's rivers, coasts and beaches.

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Secret agents opt for £25m soft sell

By Rachel Kelly
PROPERTY CORRESPONDENT

A PUBLICITY-SHY estate agent has been discovered in Hampstead. In what is believed to be one of the first cases of its kind, the agency is keeping quiet about the fact that it is handling the sale of The Towers, a newly built £25 million house which generated probably more column inches of estate agency gush than any house on the market.

More than a year and no buyers later, the agency, Bargets, has decided that the hard sell has not worked for the palatial Queen Anne-style house off The Bishops Avenue, in Hampstead, known by some as Millionaires' Row. Punters have been more interested in a voyeuristic spin round the property than in signing a cheque.

Now the softly-softly approach has been adopted. Since Christmas, when Bargets took over the sale from Savills, not a whisper has been breathed to the press that the house being sold by three builders was once the toast of the tabloids as the "largest new house to be built in London this century".

It was originally intended for a Middle Eastern buyer, and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia was mentioned. But the Gulf war stopped that. More recently, the Hong Kong businessman Dickson Poon,



No takers: the 18-bedroomed The Towers, on the market for more than a year

who bought Harvey Nichols, was said to be interested.

Despite Bargets' new approach, there is not yet a buyer for the house, set in two and a half acres with an indoor swimming pool, a squash court, a banqueting hall, a steam room, a sauna and a garage for 12 cars. There are 18 bedrooms, each with en suite bathrooms, video entry telephone, fax lines, sound-proofed floor in the main bedrooms, an air-con-

ditioned basement, ornate plaster work, panelling and cornices, pressure jet fountains, a lodge house and a gazebo. Other features include a garden with a tennis court, a pond, waterfalls, fountains and room for up to 50 cars on the forecourt.

The house has joined what agents call "trophy properties" in London for which buyers have not been found.

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Mothers and babies living in squalor at jail, judge says

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

THE mother and baby unit at Holloway jail is condemned as squalid, gloomy and infested with cockroaches and ants in a report on the prison published today.

The conditions in the unit, which is sited below an area for mentally disturbed prisoners, caused frustration for women and prevented mothers putting their babies on the floor, the report says.

"Although a nursery is to open later this month, the chief inspector of prisons' report is also critical of conditions in the 91 bed hospital at the north London jail.

Judge Tummim's report also expresses concern at the policy of separating babies from mothers when they are nine months old and says that if separation must occur, it should take place before six months.

He describes the mother and baby unit, which has facilities for 23 pregnant women, as gloomy and dark and relying on artificial lighting. "Women had access to

outdoor exercise for about one and a half hours a day, although in warm weather this was extended. The area outside the unit was littered with rubbish, including food scraps thrown out of the windows above. This had contributed to infestation by cockroaches and ants, both indoors and outside. The unit's association area and the storage room for baby play equipment were both infested," the report says.

The result, it says, was frustration and squalor for both mothers and babies. "Mothers would not put their babies on the floor. We were told 'You will not see a single baby crawling here'," adds the report of his inspection, which was carried out in April and May last year.

One in seven of the babies born while mothers were in jail were found to weigh less than 5.5lb and around 90 per cent of pregnant inmates were smokers. Their diet was high in carbohydrate and fat with too little fresh fruit, vegetables and fibre. Play materials for young babies were limited and there were no classes on parent craft and child development.

Judge Tummim says that separating babies from their mothers when they were nine months distressed women and upset the staff and in some cases mothers displayed suicidal symptoms.

The report also criticises visiting facilities, the timing of meals and the lack of women within top management. It does, however, add that there have been improvements in the treatment of inmates during the past five years.

The report calls for a purpose-built visitors' centre to replace facilities that it says are small, poorly designed and lack natural light or ventilation. Judge Tummim is backing plans to create a "Friends of London Prisons" organisation to provide funding to improve visiting areas.

He also calls for a change in meal times after finding that the "evening" meal was served at 3pm on a weekday and 2.45pm at weekends.

The report describes concern that there was only one women at senior management level in the jail. It says: "The failure to attract women governors may be because Holloway is considered to be a disturbed and unhappy establishment."

Kenneth Baker, the home secretary, said that the opening of the nursery wing would meet a number of the report's findings but added that shortage of funds was stopping the building of a visitors' centre.

Another report, published yesterday by the health department, recommends that crèches and an improved diet should be provided in mother and baby units at Holloway, Askham Grange open prison, near York, and Styal prison near Wilmshurst, Cheshire.

It also calls for a more even spread of units throughout the country, more space for nurseries, improved bathroom facilities and better sleeping arrangements.



Snookered: Susan Thompson says officials do not want a woman at the top

Pool player 'barred by sex'

SUSAN THOMPSON, a full-time pool player, was invited to apply to join the game's professionals and then rejected because she was a woman, an industrial tribunal was told yesterday.

Since then pool chiefs had continually blocked her attempts to join the professional circuit. Miss Thompson, aged 22, told the hearing.

She had won dozens of amateur titles and regularly beaten top male players, she told the tribunal in Leeds, where she is claiming sexual discrimination

against the Professional Pool Players' Organisation. She said that the body rejected her applications while granting professional status to dozens of less talented men. "It's disgusting. They have one rule for women and another for men," she added.

In 1987 she had won the Great Yarmouth Men's Open tournament, she said, beating Greg Farran, the country's number two professional in the process.

Miss Thompson, of Runcorn, Cheshire, said that afterwards a senior PPO

official approached her and advised her to apply for professional status. However, her application, and others made every year until 1991, were rejected because officials did not want a woman breaking into the sport, she claimed.

Miss Thompson, who is unemployed, took up the sport at 15 and spends up to eight hours a day in practice. She said that while professionals could earn over £3,000 at top events she could only take about £200 from contests on the amateur circuit.

Bank man 'tricked into nude pictures'

A BANK'S chief accountant was enticed into posing for nude pictures after work by a woman who also secretly photographed the layout and security system, the Central Criminal Court was told yesterday.

Marion Deepresert persuaded Nicos Pierides, chief accountant at the Bank of Cyprus, to take her into his branch in east London for "fun" pictures. Nicholas Hilliard, for the prosecution, told the court.

Mr Pierides posed partly clothed and later naked for photographs taken in his manager's office.

A few weeks later Ms Deepresert lured the 49-year-old married father of two to a friend's flat by promising a massage and sex. When they were inside, "a tall black man burst in and approached Mr Pierides with handcuffs. She went to help the intruder, but the bank official fought them off and they escaped", Mr Hilliard said.

Ms Deepresert and a man alleged to have been the intruder were arrested at the flat the following month, he said. Both were charged with affray and possession of a shotgun "but she has not appeared for her trial".

Junior McDonald, aged 32, a salesman from Dagenham, Essex, denies both charges. The prosecution alleges that negatives of photographs taken in the bank were found on Mr McDonald.

Mr Pierides, who said that he met Ms Deepresert, aged 31, through a mutual friend, told the jury: "I told her I worked at the bank in Camberwell. She asked to go there for a coffee. Unfortunately I agreed. Two weeks later she again suggested we went to the bank - she wanted to get some fun photographs of me in the bank."

He said that he had worked for the bank for 22 years but had now lost his job. Asked whether he found Ms Deepresert attractive, Mr Pierides replied: "Not to the extent to lose my job or my family for."

He was a keyholder at the bank but could not have opened the safe alone, he said.

The trial continues today.

Gas chief 'scared' of woman manager

BY TIM JONES

THE senior manager claiming compensation from British Gas for alleged sexual discrimination after being demoted from her £45,000 a year job yesterday said her boss admitted he was frightened of her.

Hilary Williams, aged 48, told an industrial tribunal in west London that the comment was made by Tony Roddis, the southwest region's marketing director, in talks about her future. At the time, she said, she was regional marketing sales manager and Mr Roddis had suggested she apply for a job in Somerset as district manager. "I said that would never happen because the operational director for that district didn't like women. Mr Roddis replied: 'He is only frightened of you like I am.'"

Ms Williams said she had expected to be confirmed in her post in spite of the knowledge that a big reorganisation was under way at British Gas. Instead, she said, the post was advertised and she was relegated to a lower position.

Ms Williams said she had been head-hunted by British Gas in 1983 and once had turned a £750,000 loss in a customer services department into a £750,000 profit. The case continues today.

Man for retrial

Joseph Nelson-Wilson, aged 34, who is accused of murdering his stepdaughter by electrocuting her, is to have a retrial after a jury at the Central Criminal Court yesterday failed to reach a verdict after a three week trial.

Mr Nelson-Wilson, of Southwark, south London, is alleged to have killed Marina Pratt, aged 14, to prevent her disclosing incidents of sexual abuse.

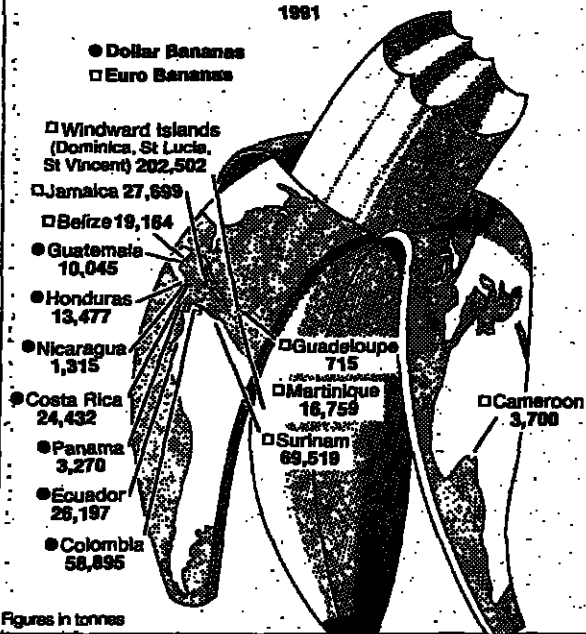
Sea case halted

Greenpeace, the environment group, has abandoned its action to obtain a judicial review of the National Rivers Authority for allegedly failing to control pollution of the Irish Sea at Alburgh and Wilson's phosphate processing plant in Cumbria, which is now to be closed. The authority is refusing to agree to the proceedings being stopped without full payment of its costs.

Science 'waste'

International competition to develop big scientific projects could be wasting resources, Alan Howarth, the science minister, said in Paris. The world could not afford "to build in parallel huge accelerators, satellites and fusion devices", he told a meeting of science ministers at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. More co-ordination of projects was needed.

WHERE BRITAIN GETS ITS BANANAS



Banana dispute puts skids under single market

Britain finds itself on the side of the protectionists as its former colonies oppose the removal of quotas that would give EC consumers access to cheap bananas from central America, writes Michael Hornsby

AN INTENSE ideological and commercial conflict over bananas is blocking the completion of the European Community's single market, straining relations with developing countries and could deliver the final blow to fading hopes of a new world trade order.

After four years of vain effort, the EC is still struggling to reconcile its commitment to free trade with long-standing pledges to protect the privileged access to its market of banana-growing countries in Africa and the Caribbean. The dispute pits free-market ideologues against aid philanthropists, sleepy French and British dependencies and ex-colonies against high-tech central American plantations, and the small, sweet, thin-skinned "community preference" banana against the large "dollar" fruit.

Last year, EC consumers ate 3.2 million tonnes of bananas. About 35 per cent were from the Canary Islands, Madeira, Crete, Guadeloupe and Martinique, or from former European colonies in Africa and the Caribbean. Three out of four of the 478,000 tonnes of bananas eaten in Britain came from the Windward Islands, Jamaica, Suriname, Belize, Cameroon, Martinique and Guadeloupe. The shortfall in supply was made up with "dollar" fruit from Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Panama.

In a straight commercial fight, the Caribbean, hampered by small farms, poor soil, hilly terrain and periodic hurricanes, fears that it would be swept aside by a flood of low-cost produce from the central American field of United States corporations such as Chiquita and Del Monte. Britain, France and Spain use a combination of duties, licences and quotas to limit the entry of dollar bananas. As a result, bananas cost about 50p a lb in British shops, more than twice as

much as in America and about 20 per cent more than in Germany, which imports vast quantities of the cheaper dollar fruit.

If bananas are included in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, import quotas would have to be replaced by gradually shrinking tariffs. Dame Eugenia Charles, prime minister of Dominica, the largest of the Windward Islands, maintains that there is no level of tariff that could provide sufficient protection. Dame Eugenia, who visited London last week to plead her cause, says: "The multinationals could lower their prices and accept losses for three years, by which time they would have captured the entire market."

The United States, as well as banana free-traders in the EC, such as Germany and The Netherlands, want quotas to go. Whatever happens in Gatt, Britain and France will no longer be able to stop dollar bananas entering their countries through Germany after the EC's internal frontier controls come down next January, unless Germany agrees to curtail its imports.

The Caribbean lobby argues that a free market would mean less choice for consumers and bigger profits for the multinationals, without any guarantee of lower shop prices. That argument fails to impress Stephen Locke, director of the Consumer Association's policy unit. He says: "It is quite wrong that a development aid policy should be funded by an arbitrary impost on consumers."

John Gummer, the agriculture minister, argues that Britain is morally bound to protect its traditional suppliers. There is sympathy for this view in the Foreign Office and the Overseas Development Administration, but free-traders in the trade and industry department are worried that insistence on protecting traditional suppliers could scupper what little chance remains for a new Gatt treaty.

Archbishop of Canterbury rebuffs mission to Jews

BY RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

THE Archbishop of Canterbury has refused to become patron of a missionary society founded to take the Christian gospel to Jewish people.

Dr George Carey is the first Archbishop of Canterbury in 150 years to turn down the patronage of the Church's Ministry Among the Jews (CMJ). Dr Carey says that because the focus of CMJ

work is directed entirely towards another faith, a formal association is unlikely to help his efforts to build up trust. Rightly or wrongly, he says, many Jewish people "do not believe that CMJ respects their integrity".

The archbishop's decision was welcomed last night by members of the Jewish community. Dr Carey was also praised by members of the Church of England working to improve relations between

Christians and Jews. The decision is significant in the light of increasing tensions between different faiths as the Christian Decade of Evangelism moves into its second year. Although the decision has brought criticism from the church's evangelical wing, the archbishop will be seen as standing by his commitment not to pinpoint members of other faiths for conversion during the decade.

In a letter to the Rev Jos Drummond, secretary of the CMJ, Dr Carey says "I know this decision will come as a surprise to many people who recognise my commitment to evangelism. That commitment remains." But alongside it stands a commitment "to do all in my power to encourage trust and friendship between the different faith communities in our land".

Mr Drummond said he was disappointed by the decision.

The Rev Tony Higon, a member of the CMJ council who has led the campaign in the church against interfaith worship, said the decision was a "shameful betrayal of CMJ, particularly in its difficult work in Israel, and a grave undermining of the cause of the gospel".

A spokeswoman for the Council of Christians and Jews welcomed the news.

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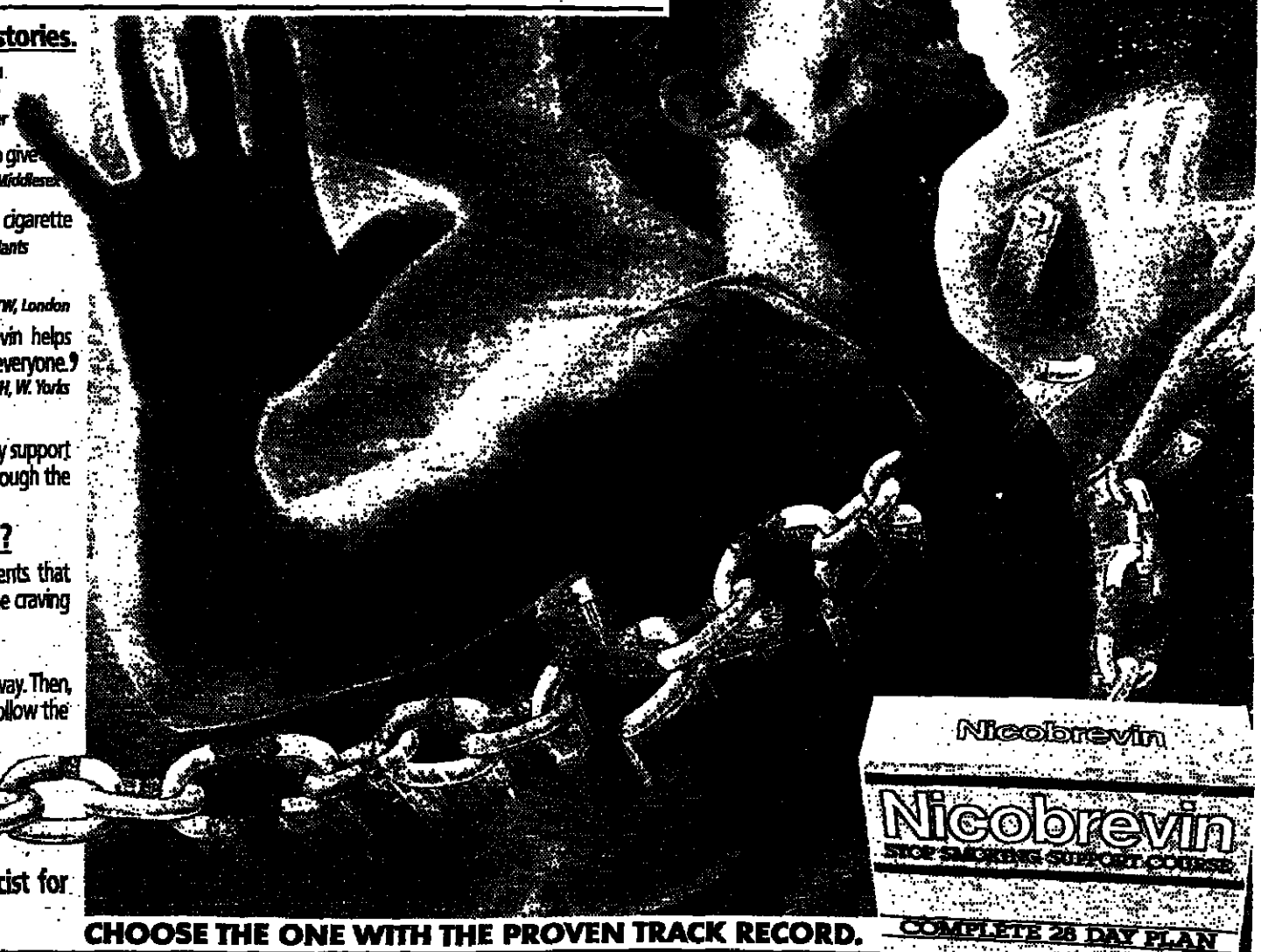
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موتة امنة الصل

Saab shows how motorists will swap steering wheel for aircraft-style controls

Tomorrow's car driven with joystick

BY KEVIN EASON, MOTORING CORRESPONDENT

FOR the driver of the future, there will be no need to climb behind the steering wheel of the car — because there will not be one, according to experts at Saab.

Engineers from the Swedish manufacturer yesterday unveiled a car controlled by a joystick, similar to those used in aircraft. Instead of turning a bulky steering wheel three times to make the big Saab saloon perform the tightest manoeuvre, the driver simply flicks the joystick to one side.

The Saab is the first car to use the same steer-by-wire electronic system which is controlling some of the world's most sophisticated aircraft. Saab is a leading manufacturer of fighter aircraft and has transferred the technology of the air to one of its 9000 series executive saloons to show how driving will change in the next century.

Messages from the joystick are beamed to a small on-board computer which then tells the wheels how much to turn. In the left-hand drive prototype on show, the driver holds the joystick in the right hand. Apart from the ease of use, the driver also has a better view of the dashboard display of fuel gauges and speed dials which are normally obscured by the circle of a steering wheel.

Saab's engineers also believe that the system would have the safety benefit of removing the large obstruction of a steering wheel which faces the driver in a head-on crash. Per Brannaby, the senior technician heading the project, said that although

the prototype has an automatic gearbox, an electronically controlled gearbox could be added with a flick switch on the joystick which would allow the driver to change gear.

He said: "It may be alarming for someone seeing the car being driven for the first time as you cannot tell how it is being operated. But the joystick has been designed with safety in mind, with the steering system totally controlled by computer."

"By putting a joystick to one side of the driver, we cut out the steering column which often causes injury in normal accidents. There is also the advantage that the gauges and controls can be arranged so they can be more easily looked at with no steering wheel to hide them."

Saab developed the joystick as its contribution to the pan-European Prometheus project, which includes about 12 manufacturers, including Ford and Jaguar from Britain, dedicated to discovering and then sharing the benefits of new technology.

The Prometheus team says that many of its discoveries, such as night sights, which help drivers see through thick fog, and automatic devices to prevent cars from crashing into the one in front, will be available on production cars by the middle of the decade.

The steer-by-wire system could also be available soon although Saab says it will be ten to 15 years before a joystick is available because of the possible resistance of drivers more familiar with the steering wheel.



Safe hands: the left-hand drive Saab 9000 with joystick control and improved visibility

Minister's retriever shot by farmer

DAVID Trippier, the junior environment minister, yesterday called a farmer who shot his dog a "hillybilly".

Mr Trippier's dog, Jet, a 14-month-old black retriever, vanished from his home in Holcombe, Lancashire, two weeks ago. Its body was found at the weekend dumped on top of several sheep carcasses.

Nell Edmondson, the farmer, who has lost 150 sheep in the last year, said Jet had been worrying his flock. He said that the dog wore no collar or tag and that he had reported the shooting to police.

Mr Trippier said: "All dogs should be collared and tagged — that's my department's responsibility and my dog certainly was. This hillybilly attitude is absolutely scandalous. Jet would never have worried sheep. If Mr Edmondson had called it, it would have come. It was very affectionate."

"It was still only a pup but it was the finest dog I'd ever had. Mr Edmondson shot it first and asked questions later. He never gave it a chance."

Man hit by train crawls 300 yards

A MAN whose foot was severed when he was hit by an InterCity express hopped and crawled over three 5ft gates, a fence and a thorn hedge to seek help. It took him 90 minutes to cover the 300 yards from the scene of the accident to a farmhouse.

Yesterday Billy Gallagher, aged 46, from Leeds, was said to be "comfortable" in Harrogate hospital after a two-hour operation in which the remainder of his right leg was amputated below the knee.

North Yorkshire police said: "It's amazing how this man managed to drag himself to the farmhouse. At some stages he appears to have hopped onto one leg to get over the gates. There was blood everywhere."

British Rail is investigating the incident which happened near an unmanned level crossing at Rilton in North Yorkshire. Mr Gallagher was apparently struck by an express from Harrogate to Leeds as he walked on the track. British Transport Police said that the accident was a mystery.

Prisoner confesses to 3,000 crimes

A convicted robber has sent crime figures for Gloucestershire soaring by confessing to more than 3,000 further offences. Mark Starr, aged 18, accounted for almost a quarter of the county's 32 per cent rise in recorded crime from 1990-1.

Starr, of Cheltenham, was jailed for four years last April for a series of robberies. After three months in prison, he confessed to a string of thefts for which he cannot be prosecuted.

Gloucestershire police said: "We have had people confess to hundreds of new crimes before, but never on this scale. They were committed over several years but, because he admitted to them all at once, they were all added to last year's county crime figures. He has single-handedly caused a large upwards blip in our total crime statistics."

Tram kills man

A man died under the wheels of a "supertram" undergoing trials for Manchester's Metrolink system. Police said that Thomas Williams, aged 36, of Cheetham, Manchester, was cut in half by the light rail train in Crumpsall, north Manchester.

Bouncer jailed

Leonard McClean, aged 42, a nightclub bouncer, of Bow, east London, was jailed for 18 months for actual bodily harm after punching a man who danced naked at the Hippodrome club. Gary Humphreys, aged 31, died an hour later.

Wrong number

The BBC has apologised to the Lord Mayor of Oxford after it used the mayoral car's number plate, FC 1, in the television series *Love Hurts*. The city solicitor had complained about the unauthorised use of the number plate.

Happy ending

Hugo White, aged three, caused a five-hour police search after he wandered into woods at Cholsay, Oxfordshire, and fell asleep. His grandmother, Marigold Warner, said: "We'd read him the story of Goldilocks and I think he may have gone to search for the three bears."

Fire deaths

Three people have died in a fire at their home in Lenzie, near Glasgow. They were John Devine, aged 81, his wife, Janet, aged 81, and their son, Jack, aged 50.

DNA test used to hook tuna tax cheats

BY STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

DNA techniques, usually deployed to identify criminals and errant fathers, are to be used by European Community customs investigators to spot the difference between tuna and bonito, in an effort to claim up to £31 million in back duties.

The investigation centres on the difference in duty between the tuna and bonito imported into EC countries. Tuna imports draw a 24 per cent duty, while the bonito attracts 18 per cent. The purpose of the import restrictions is to protect EC tuna fisheries and to exclude the Japanese in particular.

Thai exporters have been accused of canning tuna and sending it to Britain and Germany, the EC's two main consumers of tuna, described as bonito tuna. The investigators sent a six-man mission to Thailand, costing £36,000, which was shown catches which were claimed to be bonito, but the EC officials still believe that the Thais are canning a version of tuna.

The Thais insist that their fishermen are catching bonito. Despite the evidence of marine biologists that, although there is a Far East version of the bonito, it does not flourish in Thai waters. The tuna does.

The various species of tuna can reach 14ft but the three fish caught commercially, the skipjack, the albacore, and the bigeye, are found worldwide and vary from 3ft to 6ft. The bonito, a member of the same family, usually grows only to 30in.

Customs officials have interviewed ten of the leading importers in Britain to discover what they know about their consignments, and have turned to DNA to show that the fish the Thais are catching is tuna.

If DNA tests show a clear difference, extra import duties going back three years will be claimed, which could be worth £6 million in Britain and £25 million in Germany.

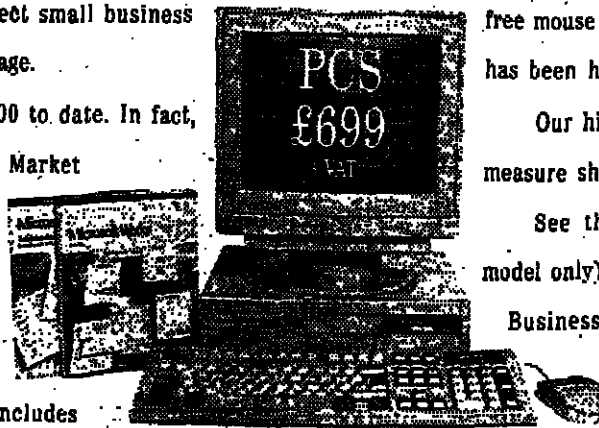
The investigation underlines the complexity of EC import regulations. Cases of misdescription and undervaluation include the rerouting of textiles from a country which is limited in imports to the EC through another country which may have a larger quota. China has tried to get around textile import restrictions, particularly those in Britain, by rerouting its products through South Africa, Zimbabwe, Cyprus and Hong Kong.

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Cancer patient wins dispute over poll tax surcharge summons

BY MICHAEL HORSNELL

A CANCER patient too ill to attend court won a poll tax victory against a local council yesterday when a summons against her for refusing to pay a £14 surcharge towards the non-payment of tax dodgers was withdrawn at the last minute.

Marjorie Roper, aged 67, who is receiving chemotherapy for lung cancer, challenged the summons, brought by Stroud council in Gloucestershire under the 1988 Local Government Finance Act, through her husband and her solicitor. Just before they appeared before magistrates at nearby Dursley to fight it, the summons was withdrawn by Geoffrey Gledhill, community charge recovery officer.

The council had discovered that an accounting mistake had been made in the amount it was seeking while the woman's husband, John Roper, a former health services correspondent of *The Times*, said it was he who should have been served the summons.

Mr Roper, aged 75, already had the agreement of the council that he was responsible for paying his wife's tax. Some of the cheques he sent to cover it, minus £14.52 he deducted over ten instalments for the surcharge, were incorrectly credited to his

account alone. This left his wife wrongly accused of being £34.60 in arrears.

At the couple's cottage in the Cotswolds after the case, Mrs Roper said: "Common sense had to prevail. Why should I pay for those who deliberately refuse? I do not expect my neighbour's milk bill to be passed on to me for payment. If she falls on hard times I might well help, but the choice should be mine."

The case comes in the wake of an NOP poll finding last week in which 38 per cent of adults said that they would refuse to pay community charge surcharges. Council treasurers say that only up to 5 per cent have refused to pay the extra sum, which appears on bills as "other adjustments".

The Ropers retired to the Cotswolds in 1981 and have been in dispute with the council for 18 months. Because they are still not paying the surcharge they will end up £14.52 in arrears by the end of this financial year and may face a further summons.

Mr Gledhill said after the case: "It's not for me to say if we will issue another summons."

Mr Roper said: "Despite the fact that I made it clear from the outset that I was the responsible payer, Marjorie was summonsed. They

should have gone for me and I don't understand their arithmetic anyway. She could not appear because, sadly, the cancer which first struck her nine years ago has returned. The 1988 act was not meant to penalise people who pay their taxes by adding the debts of known law breakers to their bills."

Despite writing to Michael Portillo, the local government minister, Mr Roper has been unable to determine under what regulation the debts of non-payers can be passed on.

Marcus Hunnibell, the council's solicitor, said the council was overzealous. "Their administration was in error because they had not followed the arrangement they had made with Mr Roper about him paying by one cheque per month for both of them. Sometimes they remembered to credit her account and sometimes they forgot. Mr Roper has highlighted the inefficiency of the council."



Full circle: Mick Callaghan, a carpenter, checks a 14ft water wheel which has been reconstructed at York Castle museum's mill using original ironwork. The mill formerly stood in the Raindale Valley on the North Yorkshire moors

Students' advert attacks university

BY MATTHEW D'ANCONA, EDUCATION REPORTER

STUDENTS at University College, Swansea, have placed an advertisement in the national press advising prospective undergraduates not to apply to the university, the latest in a series of protests about underfunding.

The advertisement, which will appear in *The Guardian* on Tuesday, tells potential candidates that the university is suffering from a chronic shortage of resources, has pushed up rent and food prices, and has victimised academics who speak out against the alleged decline in standards. Colwyn Williamson and Michael Cohen, both philosophy lecturers, were suspended after criticising academic standards two years ago.

The student union, which held a day of action yesterday, has been fined £22,000 after its occupation of the university's administration building last week. Kevin Durham, president of the union, said that the sit-in had followed six months of fruitless campaigning. "We got nowhere and decided on occupation. The money we've been fined was meant to be spent on renovation. That's all our reserve gone," Mr Durham

said that the university's attempt to attract government funds by increasing student numbers had committed it to reckless and underfunded expansion. "There aren't enough books or practical equipment in the labs as it is. If they keep increasing student numbers, then the quality of education is bound to decline."

The union is also protesting at student hardship and the withdrawal of benefits. A recent survey of 900 students at Swansea carried out by the union indicated that 18 per cent were considering leaving for financial reasons.

The National Union of Students yesterday criticised the new increases in loans available to students as a meaningless gesture. "This means that students are going to be even deeper in debt than they were last year. Increasing the loan does not give students more money," a spokeswoman said.

The government said on Monday that the maximum loan is to be increased by 25 per cent to £830 from September, a 4.5 per cent rise in student support for those receiving the combined grant and loan.

Vetting for taxi drivers

Taxi drivers are to face new checks after allegations of sex attacks on passengers and alarm that people with criminal records have been given licences.

From next month, local authorities outside London will be able to vet applicants for taxi and minicab licences by checking police records. The new powers also cover licence renewals. London taxi drivers already face these checks.

A working party, reviewing the licensing of London taxis and minicabs is expected to report soon.

Lynne Truss, L&T section, page 1

Burns man dies

Paul Hooper, aged 40, who set fire to himself, his wife and two sons at their home in Copnor, Hampshire, died yesterday. His wife Ann is in intensive care at a Bristol hospital. The sons are in a Portsmouth hospital suffering from shock.

Safe landing

A pilot landed a Boeing 737 on three wheels at Stansted airport, Essex, after a tyre exploded soon after take-off. None of the 130 on board was injured.

Children hurt

A "lollipop lady" and three children were hurt when they were hit by a car on a pedestrian crossing at Featherstone, near Pontefract, West Yorkshire.

Thefts at galleries linked

BY LIN JENKINS

SECURITY is to be reviewed at Britain's oldest public museum, the Ashmolean in Oxford, after £50,000 of ancient gold jewellery was stolen last weekend.

Police believe that the theft may be linked to the disappearance last week of an Italian oil painting, valued at £15,000, from the city's Christchurch gallery. On both occasions the items were stolen while the premises were open to the public.

The jewellery stolen from the Draper's gallery at the Ashmolean was kept in a locked glass case, which had been forced open. Attendants are on duty in most of the galleries, although a few, including the Draper's, are monitored by video. Recording the pictures has been rejected as too costly.

Richard Moorey, keeper of antiquities at the museum, said: "There is a difference between running a prison and something relatively open to the public. Security is expensive, but we keep it under constant review."

Professor Christopher White, director of the Ashmolean, said that security arrangements were approved by the government's security adviser, but promised a "rigorous review" of the situation.

Detective Inspector David Buckingham said: "To have two thefts from places open to the public in the same city within a week does suggest they could be connected."

Heavy breather in dust-up with police

BY DAVID YOUNG

A PENSIONER who suffers from asthma accidentally dialled 999 as he dusted his telephone and launched an alert which ended with police smashing open his back door.

An emergency operator at Bill Carter's local exchange spent ten minutes listening to the sound of breathing, traced the call and alerted the police. When they arrived he had left his house in Cleethorpes, Humberside, and the officers used a crowbar to force open the door.

Shortly after Mr Carter returned from collecting his pension, "I noticed my landing light was on. I never leave it on and thought I was being burgled. Then I found the back door had been forced open with a crowbar, and a window had been smashed. It was a terrible shock. I didn't know if anybody was in my house, but my neighbour told me it wasn't a burglar, it was the police."

The operator must have thought I was a heavy breather or something. All she would have heard was

the sound of me dusting the receiver and my breathing. It must have been a very strange call."

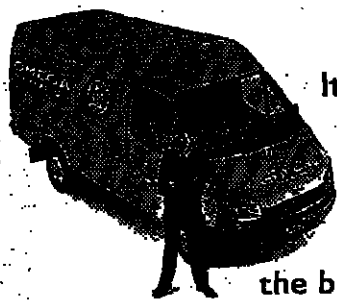
Mr Carter, however, has praised the operator for her action. "I don't blame her for calling the police. She acted very promptly," he said. He has also praised the police. "When they were told I suffered from asthma by a neighbour, they then must have thought I was having a fit or something, so they broke in."

The police have agreed to pay the £76 bill for repairs to the door.

Inspector Phil Alderman, of Humberside police, said that the operator had received an emergency call and when she heard the noises, had quite properly called the police.

"Officers attended immediately, and when they got no response, quite correctly, they broke in. It would appear that when cleaning his telephone, Mr Carter accidentally rang 999. In the circumstances we have agreed to pay for the damage."

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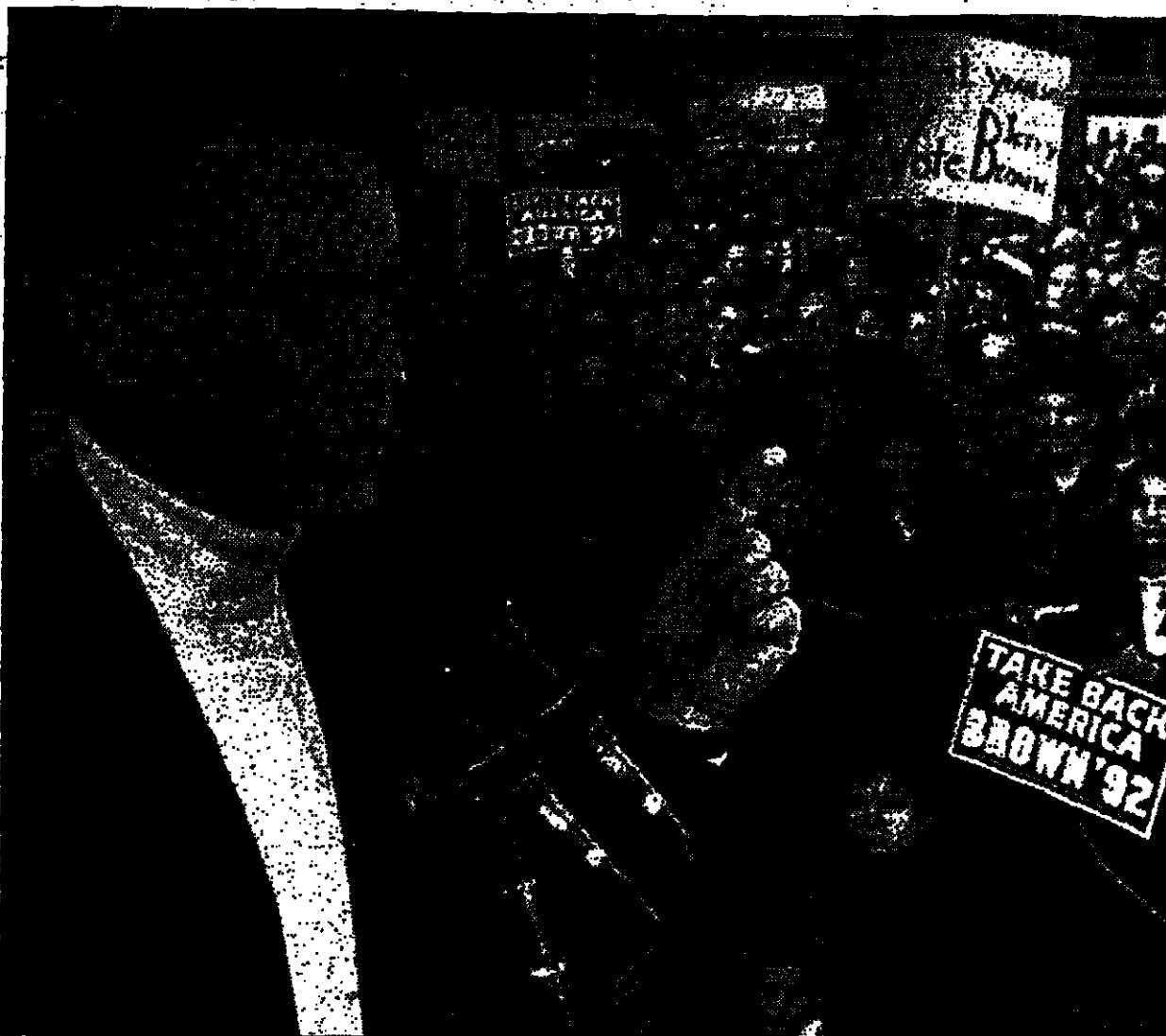
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Staging a comeback: Jerry Brown, the former governor of California, addressing a crowd of Democratic supporters in Boston, Massachusetts, on the presidential campaign trail.

Nixon attack deals poll blow for Bush

FROM PETER STOTHARD, US EDITOR IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Bush could not be sure to beat either Bill Clinton or Paul Tsongas if an election for the White House were held this week.

According to an opinion poll in *The Washington Post*, published as 11 states held Super Tuesday primaries and caucuses, Mr Bush trailed Mr Tsongas by 42 per cent to 47 per cent and Governor Clinton by 44 per cent to 46 per cent.

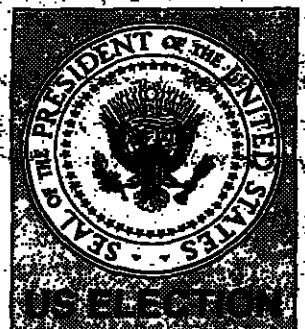
Jeb Bush, the president's son and Florida campaign manager, shrugged off the result as a mid-term irrelevance but in the White House the figures added new fuel to the debate over how Mr Bush should recast his election message. Aides expect a dramatic reduction in the president's campaign itinerary. A national televised address is planned next week to provide a new "line of demarcation."

Yesterday's poll contrasted with previous findings which showed that while an unnamed Democrat would defeat the president, any named challenger would lose. A month ago Mr Bush led Governor Clinton by 51 per cent to 45 per cent. Although the margin of error in the polls is 4 per cent, the rising acceptability of the Democrat front-runners, who yesterday made Florida their main battleground, has further alarmed the White House.

The man blamed is the Republican challenger Patrick Buchanan who has conducted a fierce assault on the president's trustworthiness and ability to lead. Mr Buchanan was not expected to win any outright victories yesterday against well-organised presidential forces in the

south. He was considered, however, to have clearly beaten Mr Bush on the stump and forced the president into a series of embarrassing confessions, most notably his admission that raising taxes in 1990 was a mistake.

For the first time since Mr Bush took office *The Washington Post* poll showed more people trusted Democrats than Republicans to deal with the country's main problems. Those approving the president's performance in office fell from 46 per cent in January



to 39 per cent yesterday, with most of the change coming from disaffected Republicans.

The president's hectic tour last week of Super Tuesday voting states seemed only to have increased the sense of failing leadership. White House officials promised that after next week's television address, which is to be aimed at congress's refusal to pass the president's "economic recovery package", the campaign would enter a new zone.

Senior Bush campaign advisers promised that when the "fire drill" of early primaries was over, the president's message would broaden into

more specific attacks on his Democrat opponents. Most of their true confidence, however, is placed in an economic recovery which they hope will turn March into a mere bitter memory by voting day in November.

President Bush also came under unwelcome criticism yesterday from Richard Nixon, the former president, who argued against the administration's "pathetically inadequate, penny-ante approach" to the high stakes game in the former Soviet Union. Washington's failure to protect President Yeltsin was weakening democratic forces and emboldening dictators across the world, Mr Nixon said in a foreign policy memorandum.

Mr Bush was not mentioned by name in the memorandum, but Mr Nixon specifically attacked one of the administration's main aid initiatives, "the photo-opportunity conference of foreign secretaries," which he said was "long on rhetoric but short on action".

Foreign policy has played little part in this election campaign. Mr Bush had been unwilling to speak much of specific international responsibilities while he is fighting off "America first" rhetoric from Mr Buchanan.

Apart from praising Operation Desert Storm and the fall of communism, Mr Bush's speeches have concentrated on domestic concerns. His retreat from his main strength is another reason for his battered credibility but, as long as Mr Buchanan is appealing to isolationist instincts, there is unlikely to be much change.

Brown waits to make or break

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

AS PAUL Tsongas and Bill Clinton did battle in the run-up to yesterday's Super Tuesday's primaries, political experts were starting to talk of what would happen if neither reaches the Democratic National Convention this July with enough votes for the nomination. There is one answer that makes the party bigwig blanch. The role of king-maker could fall to the anti-Washington, anti-establishment Jerry Brown.

The blunt, ascetic 53-year-old bachelor has confounded those who considered his maverick campaign still-born. He has tapped into public anger with self-seeking career politicians, and ousted Senators Robert Kerrey and Thomas Harkin, who have withdrawn from the Democratic race. Against all odds, he has won Colorado and Nevada, and come a strong second in several other states, with his native California still to come. He looks certain to reach the convention with significant support to trade.

If there was ever a more improbable candidacy than Mr Tsongas's, it is Mr Brown's. A professional politician for two decades and a two-time presidential candidate, he is posing this time as a rank outsider. The man who raised millions as the California Democratic Party chairman until last year, is now refusing contributions greater than \$100 (£58), and denouncing big money as the root of all political evil.

Mr Brown has a full time staff of just seven. He raises funds by blurring out his free phone number during televised debates. He travels on commercial flights and sleeps at supporters' homes. Instead of advertising, he goes on endless radio talk shows.

Mr Brown has a series of striking ideas rather than a detailed manifesto. His "We



Jackson: possible running mate

the People" campaign vows to take back America for ordinary folk. He wants to replace the vast gamut of existing taxes with a single 13 per cent flat rate tax. He would ban nuclear power and pursue clean energy sources, halve military spending, cut troops in Europe to an "exchange programme" of 1,000. He wears a red ribbon on his lapel to show solidarity with AIDS victims and spends nights in homeless shelters. He has vowed to make the Rev Jesse Jackson, the black civil rights leader, his running mate if nominated.

Syndicate scoops \$27m pot

FROM REUTER IN WASHINGTON

VIRGINIA state lottery officials have decided to award a \$27-million jackpot to an Australian syndicate that bought 5 million of the 7.1 million winning combinations, according to *The Washington Post*.

After conducting a review of the unusual circumstances surrounding the win, Ken Thorson, the lottery director, has scheduled a news conference on Tuesday to announce a decision.

State government sources said lottery officials could find no violation of its rules in the syndicate's buying spree. Two men representing the International Lotto Fund of Melbourne, showed up in Richmond with the lucky ticket at the draw.

The group bought five million of the 7.1 million possible number combinations in the "pick six" game at one dollar a ticket. It was trying to cover all combinations, but ran out of time. Lottery officials initially said that the ticket might be invalidated if it was bought in violation of the rules that stipulate that tickets be paid for at the same spot they are issued.

UN likely to reject Iraq plea for help

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

MONTHS of growing conflict between Iraq and the United Nations come to a head today around the horse-shoe-shaped table in the UN Security Council.

Armed with new figures showing that thousands of people have died in Iraq because of food and drug shortages, Tariq Aziz, the country's deputy prime minister, will appeal for a relaxation of the crippling UN trade embargo imposed after the invasion of Kuwait.

But Security Council members, opposed to any easing of sanctions, will counter that Iraq is refusing to comply with the UN Resolutions that ended the Gulf War and faces "serious consequences" unless it does so.

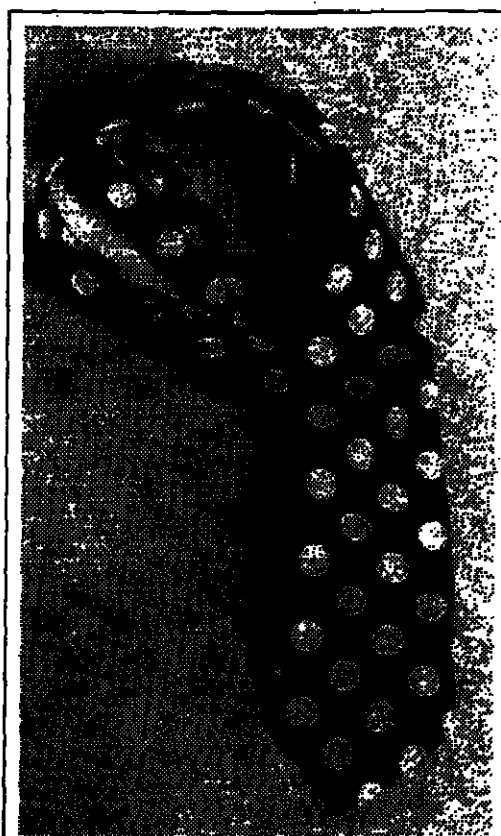
Without ruling out eventual military action to enforce the UN ceasefire terms, the Western powers on the Council have already begun studying further punitive action.

The United States has floated the possibility of a new UN Resolution seizing Iraq's frozen assets abroad, and Britain and France are considering asking the United Nations to appoint a special representative to study the plight of Iraq's oppressed Kurdish and Shiite

populations. Mr Aziz, who arrived in New York late on Monday, with a 15-man delegation, prepared yesterday for his showdown with the Security Council by scheduling meetings with the current Council president, Ambassador Diego Arria of Venezuela, its non-aligned members and Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the UN Secretary General.

As ammunition, the health ministry in Baghdad released new data on what it says are the effects of the UN trade embargo. The ministry said some 21,000 people, including about 8,000 infants, had died of diarrhoea, respiratory diseases, stomach infections and infectious diseases in the first two months of this year, bringing to 120,000 the number of deaths Iraq blames on UN sanctions. About one million of Iraq's 18 million people are suffering from diseases related to malnutrition, the report said.

The Security Council is unlikely to be impressed, however. Food and medicine are now exempt from the UN embargo, and Iraq has refused to make a UN-authorised sale of \$1.6 billion of oil to finance relief operations in the country.



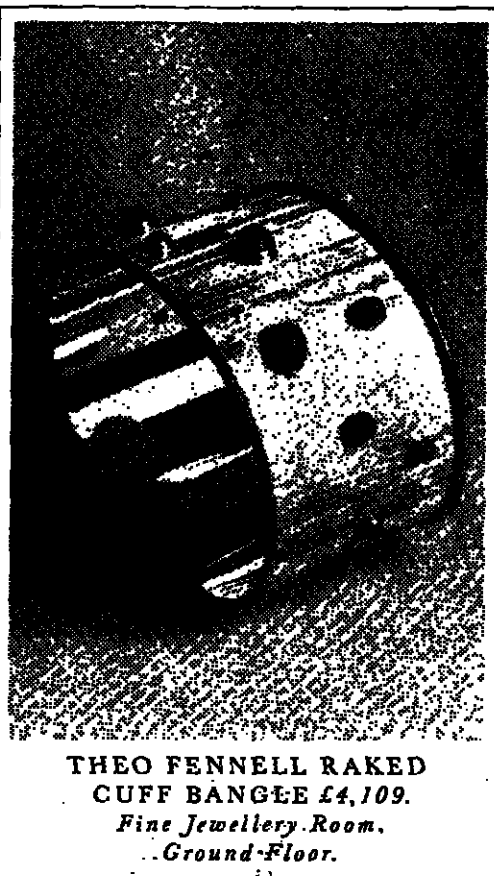
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THE BUDGET

Lamont's damp squib misses the political opportunity

NORMAN Lamont could have a big sigh of relief as he sat down after yesterday's Budget. His performance should ensure that he never has to present a Budget again. Not only did the Budget fail to live up to the extravagant hopes pinned on it by many Conservative backbenchers, it was a disappointment when measured against the economic challenges that will face Britain after the general election is over. The help for small business, industry and individual taxpayers was meagre and thinly spread. The introduction of a new 20 per cent lower tax rate may have seemed a clever gimmick, but it is unlikely to generate economic or electoral benefits commensurate with its £1.8 billion cost.

Politically, Mr Lamont's speech

was an opportunity foregone. It was an ideal chance not only to offer immediate measures to spark an economic recovery, but also to justify his dismal economic record and spell out the long-term economic plans and aspirations of a re-elected Conservative government. In all these respects, the Budget was a damp squib.

The long-term promises of achieving large tax cuts and balanced budgets under a future Conservative government were presented without conviction and, inexplicably, there was no hint at all of ambitious long-term plans to abolish inheritance tax and help small savers.

The lack of conviction on tax cuts was perhaps not surprising, given the background forecasts published by the Treasury with

The disappointing Budget unveiled yesterday is unlikely to generate the economic or electoral benefits the Conservatives were hoping for, and could prove the last that Mr Lamont has to present, Anatole Kaletsky writes

the Budget. These showed that the damage done to public finances by the recession had been far worse than even the extreme pessimists in the City had thought. So deep and destructive, in fact, has been the effect of the recession that the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement in 1992-3 would have risen to £26.5 billion or 4.4 per cent of Gross Domestic Product even in the absence of any Budget tax cuts. Looking as far as it dared into the future, the Treasury could find scope for only £1 billion of further tax cuts in 1995-6 and no chance at all of

meeting its self-imposed target of balancing the budget over the course of an economic cycle. The prospect of a 20 per cent standard tax rate seemed nothing more than a pipedream unless some future Chancellor was prepared to fulfil Labour's prophecy and raise Value Added Tax, or some other indirect form of revenue.

Had the promise of long-term reductions in the standard rate been more plausible, the new 20p tax band might have had more significance as a symbol of where a future Tory government would achieve. In the event, the new tax

band will simply produce an indiscriminate handout to virtually every taxpayer of £1.92 a week, a sum that most will hardly notice and that is unlikely to have much impact on consumer behaviour or on voting intentions. The new tax band may confuse Labour for a day or two, but in the end John Smith should have little difficulty in persuading the public that the new band is simply a penny off the standard rate by another name.

Given the imminence of the election, political calculations were bound to dominate the Budget. But Mr Lamont's speech was

also important as a reflection of the Treasury's official thinking. It seems to have judged that no further measures were needed to pull the economy out of recession. Apart from the personal tax cuts, which will have no effect on demand until well into 1993, the Treasury rejected virtually every idea presented for boosting the economy. Temporary capital allowances to stimulate investment were ruled out. There was no help for the housing market. Even the reduction of car tax was a half-baked measure. The unexpected decision to raise Vehicle Excise Duty was a petty irritant.

To judge by the Budget measures, therefore, the Treasury mandarins seem convinced that an economic recovery now really is around the corner. And al-

though they were totally wrong last year, this time they may be right. Political uncertainty played an important part in stopping the economic recovery that was so widely predicted last summer and autumn. And even if yesterday's £1.5 billion of tax cuts have minimal impact, the government has already injected £6 billion of additional fiscal stimulus through last November's revised public spending plans. Post-election political stability may also ease slightly the ERM constraint on interest rates, allowing a half point off base rates. Later in the summer, reductions in German interest rates may further expand the room for manoeuvre. But will the Chancellor benefit from the extra leeway by Norman Lamont or John Smith?

New tax band gives £100 to most earners

By LINDSAY COOK
MONEY EDITOR

THE first £2,000 of everyone's taxable income will be taxed at 20p in the pound from April 6. The new lower rate band is worth £100 a year to most taxpayers and, in the next financial year, four million people on low incomes will pay only the lower rate of tax.

Coupled with the increase in personal allowances in line with inflation, the income tax measures will reduce taxes for the large majority of people by £2.64 a week. Single pensioners should be £2.76 better off and married men aged 65 and over £3.32. Single people aged 75 and over will be £2.84 better off and married men over 75 will gain £3.37.

Basic rate and higher rate tax remain unchanged but does the £23,700 threshold for higher rate tax. The allowances for married couples and those for single parents and women recently widowed remain at £1,720 for the second year running.

To complete the independent taxation measures, which were introduced in 1990, the allowance for married couples can in future be claimed by either the husband or wife. Presently, it is paid first of all to the husband and if he has insufficient earnings to pay tax then the wife can use it. However, if a

husband is a basic rate taxpayer and his wife is a higher rate taxpayer she cannot use the allowance, which could increase their joint income by £258 a year.

Couples will be able to share the allowance out as they wish with both using half of it or the higher taxed partner using it all, costing £10 million in 1993-4.

When the Conservatives came to power in 1979 they inherited a lower rate band of 25 per cent on the first £750 of taxable earnings and a 30 per cent basic rate of tax from Labour. This was dropped in the 1980 Budget.

The cost of the new lower rate band and the increase in personal allowances is £1.8 billion in the following year.

Mortgage tax relief will continue to be paid at 25 per cent for all 10 million borrowers irrespective of their tax rate. Lower-paid savers will have to claim back the difference between the basic rate of tax deducted from their accounts and their own 20p in the pound liability.

The standard personal allowance for all people under 65 is increased by £150 to £3,445. The allowance for

people aged 65 to 74 is increased by £180 to £4,200. The allowance for the over 75s is raised by £190 to £4,370. The married couple's allowance for those aged 65 to 74 will be increased by £110 to £2,465, and those over 75 will have a married couple's allowance of £2,505, a rise of £110.

The income limit for age allowance is increased by £700 to £14,200. Above this limit the allowances are withdrawn at the rate of £1 for every £2 of income until they reach the standard allowances of people under 65.

Last year, personal allowances were increased by 9.4 per cent to 9.8 per cent, slightly above the inflation rate of 9.3 per cent.

The increase in the thresholds for basic rate tax is required by the Budget Act of 1991, which guarantees the timing of personal allowances to the inflation rate in the previous December unless the government chooses to override it. The inflation rate in December was 4.5 per cent.

The reductions should be included in the first pay packet after May 17. The allowance on Capital Gains Tax was increased by the Chancellor in line with the rate of inflation to £5,800, £300 higher than the previous limit. This means that a married couple can now make taxable gains of £11,600 before incurring tax.

The rate of CGT remains equivalent to income tax levels, or 25 per cent for basic rate payers and 40 per cent for higher rate payers.

The annual exemption for capital gains tax was raised last year by £500 to £5,500, the first increase since 1988 when it was announced that both husbands and wives were to have the allowance to set against gains. This meant that couples could make taxable gains of £11,000 on a jointly held property before they paid tax.

Since 1988 investors have been able to tax the March 1982 value as the acquired price for items sold after April 1982. The price is then indexed to the retail price index to work out the taxable gain.

Leading article, page 23
Red book, page 31



Cut expected to help industry

By KEVIN EASON
MOTORING CORRESPONDENT

CAR prices are expected fall by hundreds of pounds from midnight after the Chancellor's decision to try to revive the ailing motor industry by halving the ten per cent special tax on new models.

Mr Lamont was responding to warnings that Britain's biggest manufacturing and retail industry could slip from recession into slump after 28 months of falling sales.

Cutting the special car tax, first levied in 1973 as a temporary measure, to five per cent is expected to encourage prospective buyers. Mr Lamont told the Commons that he expected the typical saving on a family saloon

would average about £400. The Retail Motor Industry Federation, representing 12,000 car dealers, predicted up to 80,000 extra sales in the UK this year. That would improve previous estimates of market struggling to sell 1.7 million cars.

Neil Marshall, the federation's chief economist, said: "There is no doubt that cutting the special car tax will help to stimulate sales." He added: "We just hope that the extra sales will filter through quickly enough to prevent the large scale job losses which were being predicted for the motor industry."

The special car tax yielded

£1.2 billion last year to the Treasury but about £2.1 billion was lost from reduced receipts, like VAT. Mr Lamont said that the loss of half the special car tax would cost the government £635 million in 1992-93 and £765 million in 1993-94.

Car sales plummeted from a record 2.3 million in 1989 to just below 1.6 million last year in the biggest decline in the industry's history.

Environmental campaigners said Mr Lamont had not discouraged more car buying. Andrew Lees, campaign director for Friends of the Earth, said: "Making cars cheaper is not the way to discourage the growth in the number of cars already jamming up the roads."

Political sketch

Dressed to kill but with the wrong material

Some of my media colleagues saw this Budget statement as of essentially economic importance, while others insisted that it was a largely political occasion. But to my sketchwriter it was a predominantly sartorial occasion. I have never seen Dame Jill Knight looking like that.

It was a mimic of Harpic-blue with extraordinary cream swirls and huge white bars across the shoulders. To focus upon this dame's expansive bosom was like staring into an English summer sky. To behold her shoulders was like the final moment before a Chelsea fan hits you.

Nor was it only the women who amazed. Neil Hamilton's psychodic bow tie was, from this particular Tory whip, unsurprising; and sports minister Robert Atkins's lapel-borne rose was unusual only for the fact that Mr Atkins seemed to have included the stalk and the leaves too: next year he may bring the whole bush.

But Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Attorney-general, had all of us in the press gallery stunned. He wore a tie with pink spots. You have to understand the sheer dignity that is Sir Patrick to realise why, had Jill Knight worn nothing at all, she could not have surprised us more. These, indeed, were the afternoon's interesting elements.

Scarcely less interesting were the seating arrangements. I am told that this was the first time in history that every single seat in the Chamber had been booked with a "prayer card" even before the afternoon arrived. If the red rose on Dame Elaine Kellett-Bowman's breast looked a little worse for wear, this may have been because she had apparently slept in the corridors the previous night, to be sure of her customary place.

So vigorous was the pushing for position on Labour's front bench that — even before employment questions were over — all the Opposition's employment spokesmen had been pushed off by larger cuckoos. From over the dispatch box, employment secretary Michael Howard answered questions with nobody facing him to speak for the Opposition.

One of the largest cuckoos was Roy Hattersley. When he arrived there was no place reserved for Labour's deputy leader. This plainly wouldn't do. Mr Hattersley indicated that he intended to sit down, regardless. For a moment what Mr Major would call Roy's considerably large bottom hovered above Lin Golding. Few of us will forget the expression of frozen terror on the slim Mrs Golding's face as perhaps her whole life flashed before her. Then he sat. There was a sort of silent scream — if not from Mrs Golding then from the press gallery above. Parts of her emerged later, a crushed huddle, squeezed into Mr Hattersley's left shoulder.

Hardly less shocking was the moment when Margaret Beckett sat on Gerald Kaufman. She stood there, looking as though she would: he sat there, looking as though he couldn't believe it. Then down she came. As Mrs Beckett's bottom settled upon the shadow foreign secretary's elegantly suited knee, a thin smile played upon his lips at the unusual pleasure.

By now, the Chancellor was almost ready to start. Nigel Lawson, in black, at the back of the chamber, folded his arms grimly. Sir Geoffrey

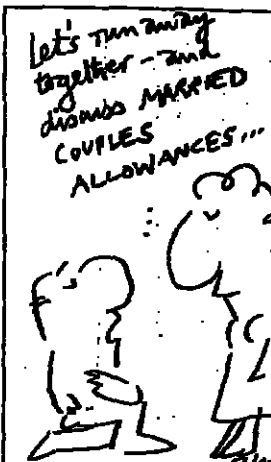
Howe put his hand over his mouth. Mrs Thatcher, in blue and pearls, held pen ready above the notepad on her knee. Alan Amos, who had made a brave appearance, sat beside friendly Maureen Hicks. Within a few yards of him I could see MPs who had been convicted of drinking and driving, reckless driving, and criminal damage, all of them standing again at the next election, and I wondered what he was thinking.

But Mr Lamont was on his feet. It was sixty-eight minutes of boredom and two minutes of magic. Or was it conjury? Perhaps Mr Kinnock would tell us. The leader of the Opposition rose to reply.

In Evelyn Waugh's novel *Scoop*, Lord Copper gets to his feet to speak at a ceremony honouring his newspaper's foreign correspondent. Lord Copper had supposed that the journalist was a "yelling man". His prepared speech concerns "the opportunities of youth". Rising to make it, he realises that he is addressing a very elderly gent indeed. Waugh describes the nightmarish moment, as Lord Copper sees his text coming at him, page after page littered with references to the opportunities of youth.

Shall he make the speech, regardless? Or shall he try to dodge each offending passage as he meets it, as though upon one of those fairground "test your driving skill" machines?

Neil Kinnock faced just such a moment as he rose after Norman Lamont's Budget. His prepared speech was all about "borrowing for tax



cuts". If the phrase "borrowing for tax cuts" occurred once, it occurred a dozen times. The Leader of the Opposition had ready a positive Presbyterian denunciation of borrowing for tax cuts. His problem was that the borrowing was notable for being not in order to finance tax-cuts.

What should Mr Kinnock do? Bask it, make up a new speech as he went along, its theme being that the recession was now so dreadful that we were borrowing up to the hilt and scaling down the expected tax cuts? Or read the speech anyway?

Mr Kinnock decided to read the speech anyway. Who can blame him? We have all experienced moments of intellectual panic and at such times there is comfort in having in one's hands a speech, even if it isn't the right speech.

But it wasn't the right speech, and, on the faces of his party around and behind him, it showed. John Smith, tight-lipped and (in Richard Page's phrase) "knee-deep in shot foxes", looked as though his mouth was full of live spiders.

MATTHEW PARRIS

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Fiscal ritual to break new ground

BY COMBINING the autumn spending statement with the spring fiscal statement, and moving the entire Budget package to December, Norman Lamont yesterday left his own indelible mark on the history of what he called "this uniquely British institution".

Other nations have never ritualised public finances as the British do. We are likely to go on doing so. Mr Lamont's reform may well heighten excitement at the new winter Budget. Chancellors will retain the style of a magician, with his bag of tricks.

The word "Budget" derives from the *bougerte*, a leather bag in which Robert Walpole had his papers brought to the Commons in 1733, when a link between the word and the annual presentation of accounts in parliament is first recorded. A pamphlet wrote: "The Budget is opened; and our state empiric hath dispensed his packets by his Zany Courtiers through all parts of the Kingdom." Walpole's radical attempt to abolish the land tax by imposing excise on tobacco and wine failed, but the name stuck.

Pitt the Younger, who combined the

Daniel Johnson predicts that the change of date will increase the excitement of the Budget

offices of chancellor and prime minister in 1783-1801 and 1804-6, created a modern system of public finance in which the Budget was pivotal. Only with Disraeli and Gladstone, however, did the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer acquire its present status. Thereafter the Budget speech became one of the great set pieces of the parliamentary year.

The tension between spending and revenue, symbolised in the division between autumn statement and spring Budget, dates from Lloyd-George's "People's Budget" of 1909. Public spending until then had scarcely exceeded that of Pitt's day. Under Lloyd-George, and his successors, the naval arms race and the burgeoning welfare state caused new taxes to be imposed, while Pitt's income tax, which Gladstone had sought to abolish, was raised to unprecedented levels. After 1909,

borrowing rose and the Budget crisis became a regular occurrence.

The most famous of these was probably in 1931. The Labour chancellor Philip Snowden introduced a furious Budget in April, only to find that it had not been ferocious enough to satisfy the markets. After the government had fallen, to be replaced by a coalition National government, Snowden introduced a second, September Budget.

In recent years the division of labour between autumn spending and spring taxation statements has become a formal one, but it is not essential. What does matter to the institution is its sense of theatre. That depends above all on Whitehall's obsession with secrecy: the former German finance minister Gerhard Stoltenberg once called longingly for a fraction of the secrecy enjoyed by his British counterparts in preparing their Budgets.

It would be a mistake to suppose that the Budget speeches of the past were more enjoyable than today's. Lloyd-George's 1909 speech lasted four hours, but according to Hilary Bellon, then a Liberal MP, it was the most tedious performance imaginable.

Small firms cheer sanctions made against late payers

BY DEREK HARRIS

THE Chancellor declared war on big companies that hold smaller businesses to ransom by slow payment of bills. Tough measures to speed settlements are expected to save many recession-hit firms from receivership and were warmly welcomed by small business organisations.

The Chancellor appeared to hint that unless companies were prepared to pay their suppliers and sub-contractors within 30 days they will in future find it difficult to win government orders.

The Confederation of British Industry and British Chambers of Commerce applauded the Chancellor's rule that big companies will have to state in their annual accounts how quickly they pay their bills. Some reputedly have regularly left payments for 90 days or more.

Government departments will be expected to set the tone for quicker payment: the target is a settlement within 30 days of receiving an invoice from a supplier. Norman Lamont said: "I want to see the government's good record on the payment of its bills extended to firms who win government contracts."

From next month companies successfully negotiating contracts with government departments will also have to pay their sub-contractors "ordinarily" within 30 days. This should be where smaller businesses will score.

Many small firms reckon late payment to be their biggest headache. A survey by the Forum of Private Business, a leading small business pressure group, put late payment of debts at the top of a list of worries. The surveys showed that typically payments were delayed 82 days from delivery of goods by a supplier and presentation of an invoice.

The Chancellor's action falls short of demands by the forum and others for legislation to establish that interest should be paid on overdue debts. Stan Mendham, chief executive of the private business forum, said: "Nevertheless the Chancellor's moves to encourage prompt payment are very welcome."

Richard Bruciani, chairman of the CBI's smaller firms council, sees publication of payments policy in company accounts as bringing the power of publicity to bear. He said: "It is a clever move by the Chancellor to set a tone for business behaviour."

The British Chamber of Commerce said the annual statements on payment policies, combined with simpler procedures in the courts when action is taken by suppliers, "must be a move in the right direction in changing the endemic culture of late payment". Other benefits for the beleaguered smaller business sector, notably the easing of the burden of the uniform business rate, were welcomed by pressure groups.

They had urged the Chancellor to throw financial lifebelts as an increasing number of small firms faced being driven out of business by the recession. A record of more than 47,000 businesses, most of them small, collapsed last year as the economic climate grew bleaker, according to Dunn & Bradstreet, the business information company. However, the number of new starts well exceeded that number.

The CBI has been a strong voice in supporting more substantial capital investment allowances to boost investment. Because the Chancellor has made no change in these allowances, Mr Bruciani felt that the Budget for smaller businesses was a neutral one.

Protest at bills secures change

BY MATTHEW BOND AND DOUGLAS BROOM

NO BUSINESS in England and Wales will face an increase in its uniform business rate bill this year above the rate of inflation, the Chancellor said. His proposals are likely to be welcomed by thousands of small and medium-sized businesses, many of which had faced rises exceeding 24 per cent next month.

By reducing the burden of the UBR, Mr Lamont has finally responded to protests voiced ever since the new rate was introduced in the reform of local government finance that produced poll tax.

The big increase faced by businesses came about ironically as part of a scheme designed to lessen the impact of the UBR, first levied in April 1990. As part of the introduction of the UBR, the first revaluation of Britain's commercial premises for 15 years was carried out. The revaluation's reference date was 1988 — near the height of the property market.

The result was an average sevenfold increase in rateable values, with the south of England, where property values had soared in the Eighties, worst hit. With many businesses facing tenfold rises in bills, transitional arrangements were introduced that limited the rise in one year to inflation plus 20 per cent for large premises, or plus 15 per cent for smaller ones.

However, these were still big increases, as when many businesses were gripped by recession. The Chancellor has now acted to amend the transitional arrangements.

It is proposed that the 20 per cent and 15 per cent increases be suspended for a year, leaving next month's rise at the 4.1 per cent announced by Michael Heseltine, the environment secretary, last year when he set the 1992-3 UBR at 40.2p in the pound. Mr Lamont said some 500,000 businesses should benefit from the new arrangements at a cost to the Exchequer of £320 million in 1993-4 when the original transitional arrangements resume.

From midnight last night, companies taking over premises will be allowed to "inherit" transitional UBR arrangements. Previously, a change of occupant meant that the new tenant had to pay full UBR immediately. That had discouraged new lettings. Stephen Thomas, of Herring Baker Harris, the property agent, said that the change should stimulate the retail and office markets.

The new charges, however, are expected to cause some confusion after Mr Lamont told local authorities, which collect the tax for the government, to collect business rates in accordance with existing legislation. New, lower bills would be sent once parliament had approved legislation, he said.

Transitional limits on firms' gains from UBR, mainly applying to industry in the Midlands and northern England, are to rise from 13 per cent a year for large premises and 18 per cent for smaller ones, to 22 per cent and 27 per cent.

Mr Lamont said the net effect of the changes would be a 3.25 per cent fall in the UBR bill paid by businesses in England and Wales in 1992-3. Similar reductions were planned for Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Firms get relief on VAT

BY WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU

NEW measures have been introduced to ease the burden of VAT on large and small companies. Large companies will not have to submit monthly VAT returns and the serious misdeclaration penalty for VAT is to be reduced further.

However, Mr Lamont confirmed hopes of a substantial rise in VAT thresholds.

The threshold, which relates to a company's turnover, has been raised only in line with inflation from £35,000 to £36,600, far short of expectations.

Mr Lamont cut the penalty that companies have to pay for misdeclaration on their VAT returns from 20 per cent to 15 per cent. He said that it was "catching too many minor mistakes". Customs and Excise will no longer charge penalties on underdeclaration of £2,000, which taken will reduce misdeclaration cases by two thirds.

The maximum default surcharge levied on traders who submit VAT return late falls from 30 per cent to 20 per cent. The cost to the exchequer is £35 million.

Tax break campaign pays off in part

THE British film industry welcomed the granting of some of the important tax breaks it has campaigned for, but there are reservations about how much help the concessions will bring.

The new measures allow all pre-production costs for films to be written off against tax immediately, and for production costs to be written off over the three years after production has ended. The Chancellor said the cost of the two measures would be £5 million in the first year rising to £15 million in 1993-4.

Under present rules, a proportion of costs can be written off over the whole earning life of a film, but only after negotiation with the Inland Revenue. Will Stevenson, director of the British Film Institute, said that the new measure could start a restructuring of the film industry.

"What it does is relieve the cash-flow problem for producers, but it doesn't tackle the investment problem."

The prospects for continued big-budget film-making in Britain were all but ruined when capital allowances for foreign producers were whittled away and finally abolished in 1985. Mr Stevenson said: "We wanted to get back to our position in 1979, and this gets us two thirds of the way there."

Sir Richard Attenborough, whose \$35 million film about Charlie Chaplin has just finished shooting in London without any British money, has campaigned hard for the industry. He said that the Chancellor had taken a step in the right direction, but not far enough.

Larry Christfield, head of entertainment at the accountants Ernst & Young, described the move as "marginal relief". He said: "With just £15 million, one cannot expect a great upsurge in British film making. It will not by itself encourage the flood to this country of American producers."

Complex schemes to be abolished

Complex schemes to be abolished

BY SARA MCCONNELL

BUSINESS expansion schemes (BES) will stop being marketed in December 1993, as they have "fulfilled their useful purpose", Mr Lamont said. Their abolition would do away with "45 pages of complex legislation".

At the same time, the Chancellor proposed changes that would make it easier for BES schemes to be used as part of a mortgage rescue scheme, keeping another 10,000 people threatened with repossession in their homes if £500 million is invested before the end of next year.

The Chancellor said: "The BES has been extremely successful. Over £2 billion has been raised and invested in qualifying schemes of all kinds and Britain now has a venture capital industry equal to that anywhere in the world outside the United States. But the provisions of the BES have become ever more complex and nowadays only a small part of the total goes to small businesses... the BES provisions for assured tenancies were intended to expire at the end of 1993. I have decided that it is unnecessary to continue the scheme beyond that date."

Tim Villiers, chairman of the BES Association, which represents BES sponsors and advisers, predicted a "bonanza" for BES companies, encouraging investors to get in before the schemes were abolished. He warned that investors should "watch out for cowboys" trying to profit from dubious schemes.

The amendments to the rules governing BES company participation in mortgage rescue schemes were welcomed by BES companies. They will now be able to buy properties from owner occupiers in difficulties with their mortgages and let them back to the former owners on an assured tenancy basis.

Johnson Fry, one of the largest BES sponsors with about a quarter of the market, said that the announcement should pave the way for more mortgage rescue schemes. Robert Lo, Johnson Fry's director of corporate finance, said: "The amount of money raised under assured tenancy schemes before the end of next year could be as much as £500 million. If you assume the average price of a property is £50,000, then 10,000 properties could be saved."

So far this year, assured tenancy schemes have proved by far the most popular. About £275 million out of the £280 million invested in BES has gone into assured tenancy schemes, according to Antony Yagdaroff, of the Allenbridge Group, the specialist BES adviser. Most of these have been sold on the basis that a company or organisation is contracted to buy the properties at the end of the term at a pre-set price.

Investors can obtain tax relief at their highest rate on investments up to £40,000 a year in qualifying companies. Up to one half of relief on investments up to £5,000 made in the first half of the tax year can be carried back. They must hold their shares for five years to get exemption from capital gains tax.

Analysts doubt optimism behind borrowing surge

BY COLIN NARBROUGH

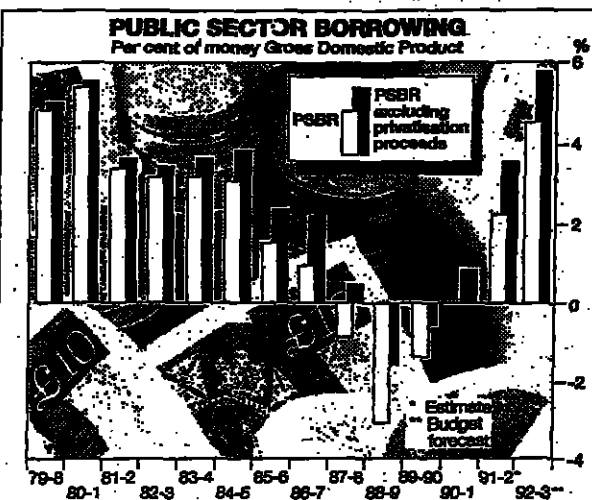
WITH the country's deficit poised to more than double in the coming fiscal year to £28 billion, and widen to £32 billion the following year, John Major's government has moved another step away from his predecessor's cherished goal of repaying the national debt.

The new target for the public sector borrowing requirement (PSBR), unveiled yesterday, surprised the City, which had been expecting a deficit about £4 billion less in 1992-3. In his autumn statement, Mr Lamont implied a borrowing requirement of £19-£20 billion for 1992-3. He raised his PSBR forecast for this fiscal year to £14 billion from the £10.5 billion predicted in November. Although Mr Lamont re-affirmed the government's commitment to restoring budget balance in the medium-term, his projections show a PSBR of 0.75 per cent of the gross domestic product in 1996-7 after a peak of 4.75 per cent in 1993-4. But the Treasury assumes that the non-oil economy will be growing at more than 3 per cent a year from 1993-4, which is regarded as optimistic by independent analysts, as it would be well in excess of growth seen in the 1980s.

The Institute for Fiscal Studies, the independent think-tank, said the further fiscal easing of £1.6 billion on top of the relaxation announced last year, made the government's declared intention of returning to a balanced budget in the medium term look "not credible at all". Edward Whitehouse, an IFS economist, said it appeared that whichever party gained power, there would be little scope to fulfil their policy pledges in the medium term.

The surge in PSBR was a "slight horror", Mr Whitehouse said. Mark Cliffe, chief economist at Nomura Research, described Mr Lamont's Budget as politically astute, but usually open about the Treasury's intentions. He said a concern was that the growth forecast made it impossible to bring the deficit back under control. He believes that with a more likely annual growth of 2.25 per cent over the forecast period, the PSBR could still be at £22 billion in 1996-7. In the first ten months of the current fiscal year, the cumulative PSBR was £6.6 billion, compared with a debt repayment of £3 billion at the same stage the previous year, reflecting a recession-induced fall in tax receipts and higher spending on the unemployed.

Financial markets might tolerate only a certain level of government borrowing through the gilt market, which is already under strain. The market fell only half a point on Budget news, but is likely to start reassessing its stance today, when Mr Major is expected to disclose the date of the election.



Treasury plays it safe in outlining a slow recovery

BY GRAHAM SEARJEANT FINANCIAL EDITOR

CAUTION has been the watchword in the Treasury's latest predictions for the economy, which show slow recovery, a continued slight fall in investment and only a modest recovery in consumer spending. The economy is expected to do little more than edge back from the worst of recession this year before recovery gathers pace next year.

Norman Lamont's search for a recovery starting in the middle of 1991 turned his forecasting ability into something of a joke. Ever last November the Chancellor was still expecting output to grow by 2.25 per cent this year. Now he has turned from optimism to caution. His Budget prediction that gross domestic product will grow by only 1 per cent this year is less than the 1.25 per cent average of outside forecasts.

Growth in Britain would therefore be slightly lower than the 1.5 per cent predicted for the group of seven leading industrial countries. Mr Lamont's caution is reflected in his prediction that recovery will start slowly. In the second half of this year, when international interest rate cuts should be resumed, output is forecast to be about 2 per cent higher than in the second half of last year, accelerating to 3 per cent in the first half of next year.

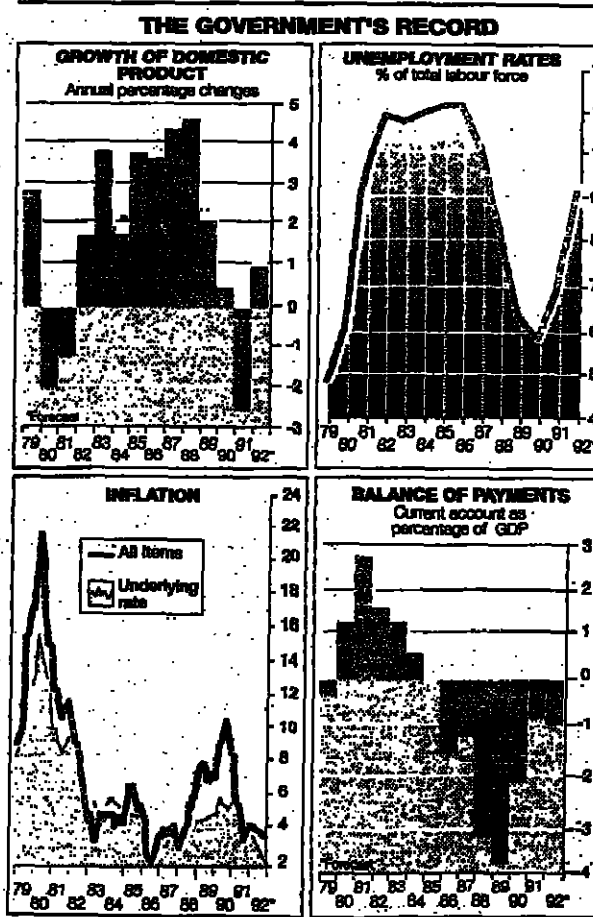
Exports can no longer be relied on as the engine of recovery because of the weakness of Germany, America, and other main trading partners. Exports are forecast to grow by 3.5 per cent, with imports still growing at 4 per cent.

The balance of payments deficit is therefore expected to widen slightly to £6.5 billion in 1992 and widen further in 1993, so that the deficit will not fall below the 0.75 per cent of output during the depth of the slump last year.

The trade deficit will also divert some of the expected 1.25 per cent rise in domestic demand, leaving manufacturing output only 0.5 per cent up this year after the 5.25 per cent fall in 1991.

Investment, which fell 10.25 per cent last year, much as forecast, is forecast to edge down again this year. Consumption, which fell unprecedentedly last year, is likewise unlikely to bounce back, rising only 1 per cent this year before resuming a more normal 3 per cent growth next year.

The upside of this caution is that inflation will keep falling. Retail prices are expected to rise only 3.75 per cent this year with annual inflation falling to 3.25 per cent by mid-1993. On that basis, Mr Lamont reckons that growth of zero to 4 per cent in M0, the narrow measure of money supply, will accommodate the modest recovery.



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£10,000+	Annually	9.75%	7.31%
£5,000+	Annually	9.25%	6.94%

PREMIUM 60 INCOME (Monthly income account)	Interest Paid	Gross Rate	Net Rate
£50,000+	Monthly	10.25%	7.69%
£25,000+	Monthly	9.80%	7.35%
£10,000+	Monthly	9.34%	7.01%
£5,000+	Monthly	8.88%	6.66%
£2,500+	Monthly	8.42%	6.32%

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Fleet firms predict revival for ailing motor industry

BY KEVIN EASON
MOTORING CORRESPONDENT

THE Chancellor yesterday promised the biggest shake-up in tax charges on company car users for a decade with the scrapping of the present system to get rid of "unacceptable unfairness".

The Inland Revenue has been instructed to draw up a new system of linking the benefit in kind which comes from the use of a company car to the vehicle price instead of the present system of using engine size categories.

The review, which should be ready by the summer, was part of a wide package of measures clearly designed to go some way to cheering industry, hit hard in the Budget last year. Mr Lamont wants a system which will ease some of the burden of the company car on business while still identifying the driver who gets a car only as a perk.

There will also be greater encouragement for motorists prepared to switch to diesel fuel, now regarded as more economical and environmentally friendly.

In addition, Mr Lamont announced a raising of capital allowances from £8,000 to £12,000 to encourage new vehicle purchases. Driving schools, taxi owners and car hire firms would also be able to recover VAT on vehicle purchases, costing £50 million in 1992-3.

The small increase in vehicle excise duty from £100 to £110 a year for car users is not regarded as being significant.

The British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association, which represents 2,000 fleet companies running 1.5 million vehicles, said it expected a 25 per cent increase in business activity as a result of

the Budget. Roger Macey, association chairman, said: "After what has happened in previous years, we greet this Budget as containing positive measures which will help revive a motor industry which has been suffering badly. There is clearly pent-up demand in the marketplace."

Mr Lamont caused anguish throughout industry last year as he increased by 20 per cent the scale charges levied on Britain's 4.5 million workers who use a company car. The motor industry predicted that further big increases could spell the end of the company car, making a severe dent in the British new car market, which relies on fleet customers for half its annual sales. Mr Lamont assured industry that there would be rises only in line with inflation this year.

The government is clearly anxious to encourage the switch towards diesel cars, which account for only about one in ten new car sales in Britain compared with about four in ten in France and Germany. Diesel cars, despite requiring engines with a larger capacity, emit 90 per cent less carbon monoxide on average than petrol equivalents, as well as 30 per cent less carbon dioxide, the gas contributing most to global warming.

A spokesman for Vauxhall said last night that the review was timely and necessary and welcomed changes which recognised recent technological advances.

"Engine size has become irrelevant as cars have developed. Diesel owners were clearly being punished for using cars which were more

economical when they should be encouraged."

Mr Lamont also announced a measure which means there will be no VAT penalty for employees who decide to opt out of taking a company car in exchange for salary from April 1.

The move on capital allowances was an unexpected bonus for industry, which has often protested at the £8,000 threshold being left unchanged since the 1970s. When the limit was set, £8,000 was about the price of a luxurious executive car but now barely covers the price of a lowly saloon.

By moving the threshold up to £12,000, Mr Lamont has more clearly aligned allowances to a reasonable medium-sized car of the type which will be used by the bulk of company car drivers, particularly those who need vehicles as "tools of the trade".

The move will cost the Exchequer £50 million in 1993-4 and £220 million when the allowance takes full effect.



Forecourt divide: unleaded petrol is likely to increase its market share this year

MOTOR FUEL DRINKS AND TOBACCO									
Typical price	Unleaded petrol	Unleaded petrol	Diesel	Beer	Cigarettes	Wine	Whisky	Typical price	Unleaded petrol
increase	48.4p	45.8p	44.6p	£1.24	£2.05	£2.79	£10.98	increase	48.4p
in duty	2.3p	1.2p	1.2p	1p	13p	5p	28p	in duty	2.3p
New price	50.7p	47p	45.8p	£1.25	£2.21	£3.24	£11.27	New price	50.7p

Price gap widens for green drivers

BY MARTIN BARROW

THE Chancellor has again widened the price differential between unleaded and unleaded petrol, a move that will be welcomed by environmentalists. He has also taken action to encourage wider use of diesel, a fuel that offers 25 per cent more economy.

While duty on unleaded petrol has been increased by 7½ per cent, duty on unleaded petrol and diesel fuel is increased in line with inflation.

BP estimated that the price of four-star unleaded petrol would rise from 224.6p a gallon to 235p (49.4p a litre to 51.7p). Unleaded petrol rises from 208.2p a gallon to 213.7p (45.8p a litre to 47p).

The price of a gallon of diesel fuel is increased from 202.3p to 207.8p (44.5p a litre to 45.7p).

Mr Lamont said: "This will continue our long-standing and successful policy of encouraging motorists to move away from unleaded petrol, which now represents little more than half the market."

BP estimated that unleaded petrol accounted for about 44 per cent of the market, having increased by about three percentage points during the past 12 months. The

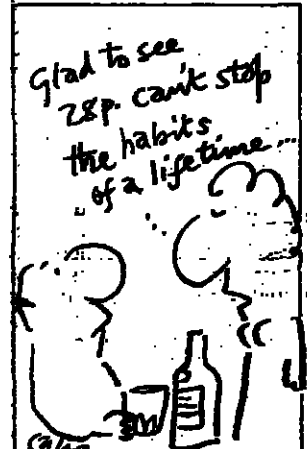
price of unleaded fuel will have increased by 2.3 per cent year on year, well below the rate of inflation.

An average motorist driving 10,000 miles a year using diesel fuel instead of petrol would save an additional £20, increasing the total annual saving to £70. However, petrol companies believe that the popularity of diesel will continue to be restrained by the higher price of diesel-powered vehicles.

Company car fuel scales, which measure the taxable benefit of free private fuel provided by the employer, will increase by 4.5 per cent. A new lower scale will be introduced for diesel.

The motor industry believes that unleaded petrol will gain further market share this year at the expense of unleaded petrol as Britain moves to limit carbon dioxide emissions from motor vehicles. However, demand for diesel fuel is likely to show only modest growth. In France, diesel cars account for over 30 per cent of new car sales, compared with about 6 per cent here.

Complex schemes to be abolished



Smokers hit by 13p increase

BY MARTIN WALLER

EXCISE duty on tobacco is to rise by 10 per cent, well ahead of the rate of inflation, putting 13p on the price of the average packet of 20 cigarettes, taking the cost to £2.21. The price of a packet of small cigars rises 10p to £1.79, although the increase in duty on pipe tobacco is held to the rate of inflation.

The Tobacco Advisory Council said last night that the industry was very disappointed at the rises. "This increase is totally unfair on British smokers and threatens British jobs," Christopher Bullock, the council's director of public affairs, said. "The UK's 17 million smokers have been hit once again despite the fact that they are

already contributing £7.5 billion in tobacco tax annually.

"Now they are being asked to put their hands in their pockets for another £750 million. They will not stop smoking but will instead have every incentive to bring in low price cigarette products from other countries at the expense of British jobs."

The 1991 Budget raised duty on tobacco by 15 per cent adding 16p to the cost of a packet of 20 cigarettes and 8p to a packet of five small cigars. A subsequent increase in VAT from April last year and increases due to inflation pushed up prices even further.

The British Medical Association had welcomed the 1991 price rises but said they were not enough to put cigarettes beyond the reach of children. Ahead of the 1991 Budget, the Chancellor had been urged by Action on Smoking and Health to make the rise 32p on a packet of 20, bringing the real price back to its September 1987 level.

The Tobacco Advisory Council, funded by the five firms that make up the British tobacco industry, says that the rate of tax increases on cigarettes over the past ten years has been 82 per cent, a period that saw the retail price index rise by 65 per cent. The fall in prices in real terms was a result of cost-savings by the manufacturers.

In spite of a 20 per cent decline in British consumption over the past decade, duties paid to the Exchequer have continued to rise sharply, to an estimated £7.5 billion in the current financial year from £6.775 billion last year and £4.224 billion in 1982-3.

Appeals of drinks industry ignored

BY JONATHAN PRYNN

THE Chancellor has ignored appeals from the British brewing and wine and spirits lobbies to freeze excise duties. However, he pledged to protect the drinks industry from tax proposals from Brussels seen as unfair by British manufacturers.

Mr Lamont announced increases in excise duties on alcohol in line with inflation, adding 1p to a pint of beer, 5p to a bottle of wine and 28p to a litre of spirits. The move was a disappointment to the wine and spirits industries, which had been hoping for a freeze to alleviate the recession's effects.

David Jenkins, chairman of the Wine and Spirit Association, said the increases were "incredibly short-sighted". He forecast that the increasing gap between duty rates in Britain and in continental Europe

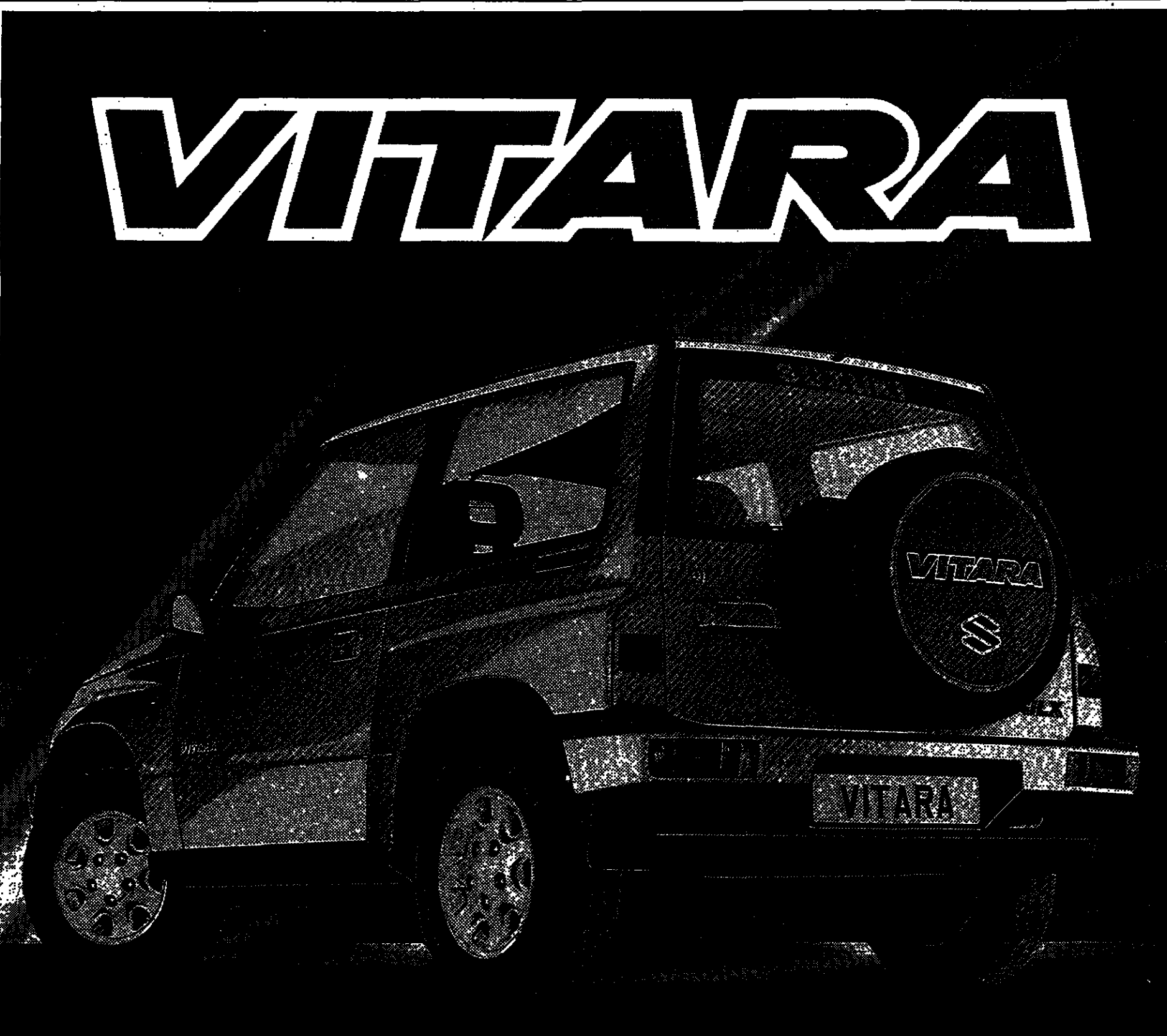
would result in further job losses but would boost sales in France next year "as Britons head for more sensibly taxed products in the single European market".

A spokesman for the Brewers' Society said that British beer drinkers now paid 41p in tax on every pint of beer, ten times more than in France and 25 times more than in Germany.

Mr Lamont promised, however, to block any EC deal "that would allow other member states to continue to levy no excise duty on wine they make, but forces them to put up duties on spirits which we make".

The duty increases also came as a blow to the spirits industry.

The Health Education Authority said that the price rises "will ensure that alcohol consumption remains at its current level and that the number of drink related incidents does not increase".



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'Ordinary people want to pass on the wealth they have built up'

£10,000 rise in threshold honours Major pledge

BY LINDSAY COOK
MONEY EDITOR

THE threshold for inheritance tax is being raised by £10,000 to £150,000, more than the rate of inflation.

Most family businesses will be taken out of inheritance tax altogether. Those affected will be unincorporated businesses, holdings above 25 per cent in unquoted or Unlisted Securities Market companies, owner-occupied farmhouses and farm tenancies.

Shareholdings of 25 per cent or less in unquoted companies and agricultural landholdings will have a 50 per cent relief from the tax, as will smaller shareholdings in USM companies and controlling holdings in fully quoted companies. Assets owned by partners and used in the partnerships may also be taxed at half the standard inheritance tax rate of 40 per cent.

The Chancellor said that inherited money was no longer a privilege of the wealthy few. "Ordinary families want to be able to pass on the wealth they have built up over their lives to their children, without an excessive proportion being taken by tax. Over the years to come I shall continue to look for ways of lightening the burden of inheritance tax."

The increase in the threshold will cost £10 million a year. A greater increase in the threshold for inheritance tax was expected after John Ma-

Major's speech at the Conservative conference last autumn.

He said that the estates of people who worked hard should not be taken in tax when they died. "I want to see wealth cascade down the generations. We don't wish to see each generation starting anew, with the past cut off and the future ignored." Conservatives believed in passing on their values, the same should hold for personal property, he said.

He continued that Conservatives had always believed in passing down their values through the generations and that "personal property should follow the same course."

Only 4 per cent of the estates of the 660,000 people who die each year in Britain were caught by the £140,000 threshold, above which they were taxed at 40 per cent. The tax collected £1.2 billion a year from an annual average of 23,000 estates.

In 1986, capital transfer tax was replaced by inheritance tax. Potentially exempt transfers were introduced. These allow people to make gifts during their lifetime, and as long as they live for a further seven years these are exempted from inheritance tax. While the wealthy have been able to pass on large parts of their estates free of



Future gain: nothing for child-minding from the Chancellor for Peter Skyle, a London trade union official, but his son Nicholas could inherit more

inheritance tax, families in the South-East have incurred the tax on relatively modest homes and in some cases had to sell to pay the tax.

Insurance policies have been heavily marketed to families with homes worth over £140,000 to cover the tax bill on death.

□ Pensioners on income support will receive extra help from October of £2 a week for single people and £3 a week for couples. This is on top of

the 7 per cent increases announced last October, which come into effect next month. The move will help five million less well-off pensioners at a cost of £305 million in a full year.

By October, income support rates for pensioners will have increased by at least £5.75 and for those over 80 will be up to £10.70 higher. From October the income support level for those over 60 will be £59.15 for single

people and £91.95 for couples. Those over 75 will get £61.10 and £94.60 respectively and those over 80 will get £65.20 and £99.15.

The rates for housing benefit and community charge benefit will be automatically adjusted to be consistent with income support.

Tony Newton, the social security secretary, said that the increase would benefit nearly half of all pensioners.

New short-term bond will raise investment limit

BY NEIL BENNETT
AND LINDSAY COOK

NATIONAL Savings is launching a Guaranteed Growth Bond this summer to attract basic rate tax payers and to help to fund the growing public sector borrowing requirement.

The new product differs in many respects from National Savings' existing range. Most significantly the bond will have a maximum investment level of £250,000, the biggest yet. Until now the highest limit has been £100,000 on the Capital Bonus Bonds. The minimum investment will be £1,000.

The bonds will last for only one year to attract shorter term investors. Most National Savings products, including savings certificates, lock up funds for five years.

The bonds will also be the first to pay interest net of basic rate tax. Current National Savings products either pay tax gross or are exempt.

National Savings is expected to contribute £3 billion towards funding the PSBR in the current financial year and this is forecast to rise in 1992-3 with the benefit of the new product.

National Savings says the Guaranteed Growth Bond is aimed at basic rate tax payers who are looking for a high return from a secure source. The actual interest rate will

not be announced until closer to the launch. This is the second year that National Savings has benefited from the Budget as borrowing requirements increase. Last year the Children's Bonus Bond was announced. It was launched in July and pays 11.84 per cent for five years, tax free. It had attracted £102 million by the end of January.

The third series of Capital Bonus Bonds was also announced and a new issue National Savings certificate paying 8.5 per cent tax-free. The Yearly Plan was also upgraded. This is currently selling at the rate of £230 million a month. The limit on new investment into the certificates is £10,000.

Index-linked certificates, which pay 4.5 per cent above inflation tax-free over five years had their investment limit boosted to £10,000 in last year's Budget.

The department is now offering much more competitive rates, after years of falling below the rates offered by building societies and banks, enabling it to make an increasing contribution to government funding.

Building society receipts have been dented by the improvements and the increased holdings limits for the tax-free National Savings products.

A share of £15m must go to the dogs

By JOHN GOODBODY
SPORTS NEWS
CORRESPONDENT

THE government will reduce betting duty by 0.25 per cent, releasing about £15 million a year for sport.

In cutting the betting duty from 8 per cent to 7.75 per cent, Norman Lamont stressed that the bookmakers should be mindful of greyhound racing as well as horse racing in distributing the new money.

Mr Lamont said that he hoped that voluntary arrangements could be made to direct some of this money to help the greyhound racing industry and the home secretary would be "exploring the possibilities with interested parties".

Kenneth Baker, the home secretary, later announced that the bookmakers' contribution to the betting levy for 1992-3 would be about £48

BETTING

million, assuming a turnover of £4,300 million. Horse racing had been seeking £50 million, while the bookmakers were offering £35.5 million.

Sir John Sparrow, the chairman of the Horserace Betting Levy Board, said: "I am delighted that the Chancellor has responded positively to the representations from the racing and bookmaking industries by reducing off-course betting duty. The home secretary's complementary levy determination, which I greatly welcome, will provide a much-needed boost to racing."

Archie Newhouse, chief executive of the National Greyhound Racing Club, said: "We are delighted with the news and clearly there must now be something coming back to our sport. All we have ever asked for is fair play and we hope that the bookmakers take this on board. The government has clearly seen that there is a disparity between horse racing and other sports."

Pensions tax relief cap rises

BY LINDSAY COOK
MONEY EDITOR

THE cap for earnings to be eligible for tax relief on pensions contributions is to be raised from £71,400 to £75,000.

The pensions cap introduced in 1989 for occupational and personal pensions means that people who joined schemes after then are limited to tax-free contributions on earnings up to the cap.

The cap is increased in line with the retail prices index. Pension contributions can be made on larger salaries but they do not attract tax relief.

Lower gift levels may raise £400m

BY SARA MCCONNELL

CHARITIES yesterday welcomed the decision to reduce the minimum level for one-off donations under the Giftaid scheme from £600 to £400.

They said the change could attract up to £400 million for charities next year, double the amount raised this year. The charities had argued that the previous high level had put people off giving.

Michael Brophy, director of the Charities Aid Foundation, said: "The Giftaid scheme has been very successful. We estimate that if the floor for giving is reduced by a third we could see a substantial increase next year and it could double." The reduction starts on July 1.

Adrian Randall, of the Charity Finance Directors' Group and finance director of the Cancer Research Campaign, said: "There are a considerable amount of gifts in the area below £600. People are reasonably happy to give £10 to £15 a month but there aren't that many people giving larger individual gifts."

The Chancellor said that £200 million had been raised to date under the scheme, four times as much as the £50 million Giftaid was expected to raise in the first year.

Under the scheme, introduced in 1990, individuals and close companies can

make one-off gifts every year out of net income. The maximum donation of £5 million was abolished in last year's Budget. Charities can claim back basic rate tax on the donation and if the donor is a higher rate taxpayer they can apply for higher rate relief.

Mr Brophy said that the cut in the rate of tax on the first £2,000 of taxable income to 20p in the pound would have an almost unnoticeable impact on charitable giving. Charities had feared that a 1p cut in the basic rate of income tax would cost them up to £20 million in lost tax refunds.

Charities welcomed the changes to covenants which will simplify the administration of the schemes. Tax relief can now continue on four-year covenants without them having to be renewed.

From April 1, the maintenance of equipment used by the Talking Books for the Blind Service will be zero-rated for VAT purposes. Charities will also pay no VAT on toilet facilities in charity-run buildings, boats built or adapted for the handicapped, and parts and accessories supplied to sea rescue charities.

These changes, worth up to £3 million a year, fall far short of the rebates charities had hoped for.

Investors can put their full allowance into unit trusts

BY SARA MCCONNELL AND
JON ASHWORTH

PERSONAL equity plans have been given a boost with savers being allowed to put their full £6,000 Pep allowance in unit or investment trusts for the first time. The change, warmly received in the investment industry, will help savers to compare Pep performances more accurately and could lead to a drop in charges.

Mr Lamont said that Peps had been introduced in 1986 to make investing in shares more attractive. Until now, savers wishing to invest in a unit or investment trust through the tax-free Pep wrapping were limited to a £3,000 maximum.

Savers were free to invest another £3,000 in a selection of shares, again under the umbrella of a Pep, or to put their entire £6,000 in a share-select Pep. Now, they can invest £6,000 in either.

Barry Bateman, chairman of the Unit Trust Association (UTA), said that Peps were now likely to play an even more important role in financial planning. "In the past, they have been very difficult to administer, with part in unit trusts or investment trusts and part in shares," he said. "They are now probably the most tax-efficient way for people to invest."

Mr Bateman said that he

expected unit trust companies to launch a wide variety of new Pep schemes after the general election.

John Spiers, editor of *Best Pep Selections*, said that Pep charges could fall as a result of the move. "There will no longer be a need for expensive administrative costs for the separate parts, and this could bring charges down," he said.

It would also be easier to compare Pep performances now that the limits were the same, he said. "This will be a massive boost for the unit trust industry," he said.

Investment managers had hoped that Mr Lamont would act as he has and let the whole £6,000 standard Pep allowance be put in qualifying unit trusts or investment trusts. To qualify, at least 75 per cent of a trust's investment must generally be in UK shares.

Mr Lamont's moves will also close a loophole enjoyed by investment trust companies which have been able to take in the full £6,000 from savers by launching new issues. M&G exploited this loophole last year when it attracted £246 million into its new income investment trust, of which £122 million was transferred into a Pep. The trust was launched to take advantage of the loophole.

Inland Revenue figures show that 32 per cent of all

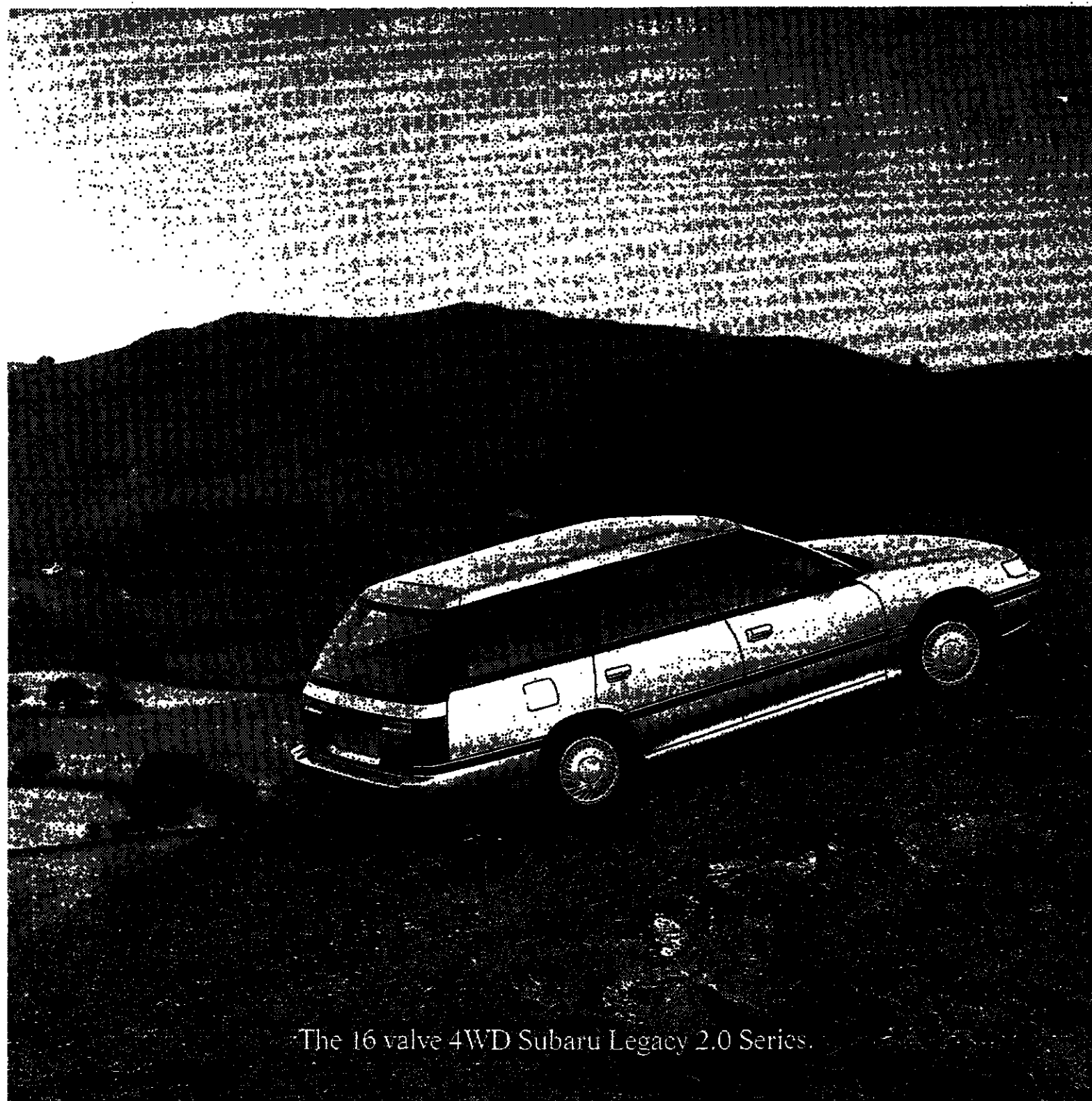
holdings in April 1991 were in unit trusts, a figure that has steadily increased since 1987. The corresponding figure for investment trusts is 4 per cent.

Since Peps were introduced in the 1986 Budget, investors have been allowed to put part of their annual Pep allowance into unit trusts or investment trusts. However, Chancellors have always favoured direct equity investment in Peps, which allow investors to take any income or capital gains free of tax and have been reluctant to yield to requests from the UTA and the Association of Investment Trust Companies that investors with small sums be allowed to spread risk. The aim of Peps was to encourage investment in shares of UK companies.

The Pep allowance was raised in successive Budgets until the present limit was reached in the 1990 Budget. The level of the unit trust or investment trust arrangement had remained constant until now.

Since last year, people have also been able to put up to £3,000 in a single company Pep, allowing a total investment of £9,000 a year. The Inland Revenue said that in the tax year 1990-1, 500,000 plans had been taken out, making 1,470,000 plans taken out since their introduction.

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Tax cut 'will benefit those on low incomes'

Continued from page 15

between connected persons. The manipulation which has already occurred has involved tax of some hundreds of millions of pounds. This loophole will be closed immediately.

I have one change to make to the Business Expansion Scheme. It has been put to me that the BES could play a valuable part in helping to ease the problem of mortgage repayments. At present, companies can use the BES to acquire empty repossessed houses, but there are complications if the houses are still occupied. I propose to make it easier for the BES to be used for mortgage rescue schemes, where owner-occupiers in difficulties wish to stay in their homes as assured tenants. This will add to the impact of the measures I announced in December to help the housing market.

But I have also looked closely at the entire rationale behind the Business Expansion Scheme, which is an exceptionally generous tax relief. When Sir Geoffrey Howe introduced it in 1983, the venture capital industry was in its infancy, and there was concern that the investment of small firms were not well understood and provided for.

The BES has been extremely successful. Over £2 billion has been raised and invested in qualifying schemes of all kinds. And Britain now has a venture capital industry the equal of that anywhere in the world, outside the United States. But the provisions of the Business Expansion Scheme have become ever more complex. And nowadays only a small part of the total invested goes to small businesses.

As Nigel Lawson made clear when they were introduced, the BES provisions for assured tenancies were intended to expire at the end of 1993. I have decided that it is unnecessary to continue the Business Expansion Scheme beyond that date, not only for assured tenancies, but for other investments as well. BES will therefore come to an end on December 31, 1993. As I have said, it has fulfilled a useful purpose. But its removal will significantly improve the neutrality of the tax system. And some 45 pages of complex legislation will be removed from the statute book.

As a result of my announcement today, there is likely to be some acceleration in investment, which will be welcome. In the long run there will be a substantial saving, perhaps £130 million a year.

Last year, I made it clear that I was concerned about the position of the British film industry and that I would consider carefully any further proposals that the industry

brought forward. I have done so. Although a special tax regime already exists, the industry has long argued that the provisions for writing off expenditure do not fully take account of their special circumstances, and in particular of the cashflow problems that may be caused by the sometimes lengthy gap between the completion of a film and its release. I propose two measures to alleviate the position.

First, relief for pre-production expenditure will be available as it is incurred. And second, production expenditure will be available for write-off at a fixed rate of one third each year, on a straight-line basis, starting immediately on the completion of the film. This will have cost about £5 million in the first year, and around £15 in 1993-4.

Tax based on price

The motor industry is and will remain at the very heart of British manufacturing.

Facing a sharp fall in domestic demand over the last year, the industry responded in exactly the right way, by switching production to exports, which rose by 20 per cent in 1991. The fall in domestic sales should not be allowed to obscure this growing strength, which should make Britain a net exporter of cars by 1996 for the first time since 1974.

None the less, I recognise that the last year has been a difficult one, and the measure I am proposing today will help the industry, while building on and continuing the reform of the taxation of cars that I and my predecessors have introduced.

Before the 1988 Budget, the car scale charges — the income tax charge on those who have the benefit of a company car — were too low. Since then, we have moved much closer to realistic levels. I propose this year to increase the scale charges only in line with inflation. Otherwise, the real value of the tax payable would fall.

But there are still aspects of the car scale charges which are both arbitrary and unfair. For most cars, the tax payable is determined not by reference to the value of the car, but rather by the car's engine size. As the Monopolies and Mergers Commission has pointed out, this causes distortions. It also discriminates against diesel cars. The unfairness in the current system may have been acceptable when the tax charge was only a fraction of the true

value to the user, but that is no longer the case.

We need a system that better measures the value of the benefit. That means basing the tax charge on the price of the car, not its engine size. I therefore propose to introduce price-based scales as soon as practicable.

The Inland Revenue will be publishing a consultative document in the summer on the details and timing of such a move.

The car fuel scales, which measure the taxable benefit of free private fuel provided by the employer, have remained frozen since 1987. I propose to increase the scale for free petrol by 4.5 per cent. But at the moment, we apply the same charge to diesel as to petrol, even though the cash value of free diesel is less. That means the fuel scales are too high for diesel cars. So I propose to introduce a new, and significantly lower, scale for diesel, bringing the tax charge closer into line with the value of the benefit received.

While the income tax treatment of cars has until recent years been much too generous, in other ways cars have been the subject of discriminatory tax treatment. I have some changes to announce that will reduce that discrimination, and provide a boost for all businesses buying cars and for the car industry itself.

First, companies that offered their employees the alternative of cash or a car have found themselves liable to pay VAT on the salary foregone by those who chose the car. That is clearly nonsensical. I shall be laying on order to make clear beyond doubt that from April 1 a VAT charge will no longer be imposed in these so-called salary sacrifice cases.

Second, the capital allowances available for business cars are currently restricted for cars costing more than £8,000. This limit is now unrealistically low and I propose to increase it to £12,000, enabling full capital allowances to be given on most business cars. This measure will cost £50 million in 1993-4, building up to £220 million when the change has its maximum effect. But the revenue cost in the long term will be small.

At present, most taxi and car hire firms and driving schools cannot recover the VAT they pay on their cars even though their cars are



Party faithful: Kenneth Baker, the home secretary, showing his approval after a pre-Budget cabinet meeting yesterday

their businesses. I propose to end this anomaly from August 1, at a cost of £50 million in 1992-3.

These measures will go some way towards improving the neutrality of the tax system as it affects cars purchased by busi-

nesses. But I have one further measure to announce, which will affect all those buying new cars.

In 1973, car tax was introduced, to make up the difference between VAT and the former purchase tax. It has remained unchanged at 10 per cent of the wholesale price ever since. This tax distorts consumer spending, and car manufacturers have long complained that our taxes on new cars are higher than those of other main European producers.

This government has always sought to reduce distortions in the tax system, and I therefore propose to reduce car tax by half to 5 per cent, from midnight tonight. This will directly reduce the tax burden on all new cars. I trust that car dealers will respond by passing the full benefit of this reduction — about £400 on a typical family car — to the buyer. The halving of car tax will cost about £635 million in 1992-3, and £765 million in the following year.

£15 million in 1992-3. The Home Secretary will be announcing later today his determination of the horse race betting levy and he will be making proposals to ensure that the greater part of this reduction will be channelled to the horse racing industry.

That is an important part of this measure. I shall review the cut in betting duty next year.

A proportion of the reduction, of course, will be attributable to betting off greyhound racing. I hope that voluntary arrangements can be found to direct some of this money to help the greyhound racing industry, and the home secretary will be exploring the possibilities with interested parties.

I should also tell honourable members quite clearly what I am not doing. I know that there is particular concern about the European Commission's proposals on the taxation of alcohol. But, let me make it clear — I will not accept any deal in Brussels that would ride roughshod over the interests of the British cider industry. Nor will I accept a deal that would allow the government to continue to levy no excise duty on wine which they make, but forces them to put up duties on spirits which we make.

Over the past 13 years, we have introduced a number of measures directed at encouraging charitable giving. We introduced the payroll-giving scheme. We have extended and widened VAT reliefs. And the Prime Minister, when he was Chancellor, introduced the gift aid scheme.

Gift aid allows tax relief on one-off donations of £500 or more. And it has been a considerable success — charities have received nearly £200 million in income under the scheme.

I propose that from July 1 1992 the minimum gift should be reduced to £400, the figure proposed by the Council for Charitable Support and the Charities Tax Reform Group. I shall not go further, because I know that some charities are concerned that to do so might reduce the attraction of regular giving through charitable covenants.

But I propose some changes to the arrangements for tax relief on charitable covenants, intended to reduce administration costs for charities and help them to maintain a steady and reliable flow of income. And I propose a number of minor improvements to the VAT reliefs available to charities and for aids to the disabled.

Peps limit scrapped

Savings are a passport to personal independence and security: the very foundation of a property-owning democracy. That is why over the last decade this Government has set out to lighten the burden of taxation on saving.

We have reduced the basic and higher rates of income tax, and abolished the investment surcharge. We have extended savings incentives to the mass of ordinary taxpayers by introducing TESSAs, which allow people to invest up to £9,000 over five years in a bank or building society account.

We have also introduced new and popular incentives to invest in shares. In 1986 we introduced Peps, to enhance the attraction of investment in shares, by making the income and capital gains from them free of tax. Today I want to improve Peps still further, by removing the £3,000 limit on the amount that can be invested in unit or investment trusts. I propose that from April people should be able to invest up to the full £6,000 a year in qualifying investment and unit trusts. This new opportunity — which will cost £10 million in 1993-4 — will provide further encouragement to Peps, and help to small savers.

We do not see the returns to savings as "unearned income", to be taxed more heavily than earned income. On the contrary, we will continue to lighten the burden of tax on savings, and to broaden the range of investments which receive savings incentives.

Income support up

No one has benefited more from our encouragement of savings than pensioners. In the 1980s, most pensioners saw their real incomes rise sharply, as inflation fell and the value of occupational pensions rose. On average, pensioners' real incomes increased by more than a third between 1979 and 1988. More than half of pensioners now have a second pension; and pensioners have seen their income from saving double since 1979.

I propose that the income tax allowances for the over-65s — both the personal allowances and the married couple's allowances — should increase in line with inflation. The income limit for the age-related allowances will also increase in line with inflation.

Increases in the age allowances can, of course, only benefit those pensioners who pay tax. But this year I also wanted to help the less fortunate pensioners — those whose savings have been eroded over the years by inflation; those who have only modest occupational pensions; and those who retire too early to take advantage of the growth of Serps.

Last October, the Secretary of State for Social Security announced that the income support rates for pensioners would be increased this April by at least 7 per cent. And there were extra increases for disabled pensioners and the over-80s.

I now propose a further increase in income support rates, of £2 for single pensioners and £3 for pensioner couples. When this comes into effect, in October, all pensioners on income support will be at least £5.75 a week better off than they are now, and some will be as much as £10.70 a week better off. In total, some five million people will benefit. And it will bring the real increase in spending on benefits for poorer pensioners since 1989 to more than £700 million.

The cost, some £145 million in 1992-93, and £305 million in the following year, will be financed from within the existing public expenditure plans.

Choice for couples

Turning now to income tax more generally, I do not propose this year to increase the basic rate limit, the level of taxable income above which people begin to pay higher rate tax. Compared with indexation this will save £180 million in 1992-3 and £290 million the following year.

Nor do I propose any increase in the married couple's allowance for couples under 65 or the allowances that are linked to it. But I do have one significant change to announce. The introduction of independent taxation in 1990 brought privacy and independence to married women, by ending the rule that a wife's income was assumed to be her husband's. This change was widely welcomed. However, it did not eliminate completely the discriminatory features of the old system.

At present the husband receives the benefit of the married couple's allowance unless his income is too low to make use of it. That means that the husband's tax allowances are almost always greater than those of his wife. It also means that couples where the wife is a higher rate taxpayer and the husband is not pay more tax than couples where the husband is the higher rate taxpayer. This cannot be right. It is hardly surprising that the MCA has been described by some working women as the Male Chauvinist Allowance.

I propose to change this system. From 1993, couples will have a choice. If they take no action, the husband will continue to receive the MCA as

now. They will be able to decide that the wife should receive the whole allowance, or that they should split it. Or the wife will be able to claim half at her own request. This measure will have only a small effect on revenue — £10 million in 1993-4 — but it will make the tax system much fairer to married women.

This Government has halved the basic rate of income tax to 8 pence since we took office in 1979, to 25 pence.

And, as the House knows we are committed to reducing the basic rate to 20 pence, and when it is prudent to do so, I reaffirm that commitment today.

For the year ahead, I propose that the personal allowance should be updated only in line with inflation. It will rise from £3,295 to £3,445. But this figure has been carefully calculated for this year's Budget. I have decided that for the year ahead it is right to let the basic rate at 25 pence the pound.

But I do believe that it is possible, desirable and prudent to take a substantial step this year towards a goal of a 20 pence basic rate for all taxpayers.

It is neither necessary or desirable that anyone giving more than their personal allowances should start paying income tax at a rate of 40 per cent. With national insurance contributions at 10 pth that means that the Government takes a third of every £1 earned even from the lowest. In my view that is simply too much; and I believe that can and should be reduced. So I propose this year to cut the rate of income tax five pence, to 20 pence, for the first £2,000 of taxable income. This will benefit every taxpayer in the country. But it will be proportionately greater benefit to those on low incomes, and represents a decisive first step towards the government's objective of a 20 pence basic rate.

In the next Parliament we will gradually move closer to that goal. We will be able to do this in two possible ways: by extending the width of the 20 pence band, so that it covers increasing numbers of basic rate taxpayers; or by receding the basic rate itself.

But next year nearly 4 million people on low income will be paying no tax at all by the 20 pence band. Their income tax bill will be cut by a fifth.

That will improve their incentives and make more money available to them. It will also be a step towards a more equitable tax system.

And nearly 25 million people — every taxpayer in the country — will see their starting point of tax reduced to 20 pence, combined with the indexation of the personal allowance, which will reduce taxes for the large majority of taxpayers by at least £2.64 a week.

Mortgage interest relief at source will continue to give at 25 per cent for every day, irrespective of whether you are a non-taxpayer, a 20 pence taxpayer, a basic rate taxpayer, or a higher rate taxpayer. But those in the 20 pence band will only be liable for tax at 10 pence on their savings.

The new 20 pence band will cost £1.8 billion in 1992 and £2.3 billion in the following year, broadly equivalent to the cost of a penny off the basic rate. But, in comparison, a penny off the basic rate, a 20 pence band, will be of particular benefit to those on low incomes. Indeed, about one quarter of the cost will be borne by taxpayers earning less than average male earnings.

I now turn to valuations. I have a very important announcement to make to which I hope the whole country will listen carefully. I have decided, no longer to raise or to cut the scope of VAT.

The total impact of taxation proposals I have put forward today, taken together with measures announced in my last Budget, will reduce the burden of taxation by £1.5 billion, equivalent to 0.25 per cent of GDP, in the next financial year.

The Budget I have presented today is a Budget of the recovery. It maintains the policies that have slashed inflation and reduced interest rates and it includes measures that will help businesses, large and small, up and down the country.

But it is also a Budget that cuts taxes for everyone in the country. A Budget that marks another significant step in our constant drive to ease the burden of taxation on individuals and families, more of what they earn over the last decade, our battle to ease the burden of taxation on the working man, and the growth in living standards of the British people. My Budget today comes that process, and I commend it to the House.

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'The Chancellor is sticking to his economic guns when they are trained on the people of his own country'

Kinnock condemns election 'bribery'

Kinnock's praise for the Chancellor's delivery of the Budget was immediately qualified: "I offer my congratulations with greater felicity than usual because it is the Budget given by the Chancellor."

He welcomed several of the measures. "I think the step he has taken in radical reform of the tax process is worth a welcome. It is a policy which has had for several years."

He also welcomed the measures introduced to help businesses, large and small, on and freezing of uniform rates, but asked why the government had waited for 21 months before doing this, he said, was "evidence of the political process."

Changes in special car tax were approved of, as were modest steps in relation to the film industry. Since the Chancellor was making substantial changes to the Budget, he had used these to help the industry.

Kinnock said that Britain was in the midst of the worst recession since the 1930s and that unemployment was rising towards 2.75 million. What the country needed was a budget to stimulate the economy. What it was a Budget which was to bribe voters with "money". Borrowing was not prudent budgetary measure.

The Budget did not provide a single extra research post or put an extra police

man on the street, said Mr Kinnock. The extra £2 billion on the public sector borrowing requirement gave a new meaning to the idea of state funding of political parties.

The government had no excuse. In 13 years, despite £100 billion of oil revenues, £40 billion of income from privatisation and revenues from the higher tax burden, the best the Chancellor could do was to forecast a paltry 1 per cent growth, further rises in unemployment, a growing deficit and a PSBR of £28 billion, double this year's.

What a terrible confession Mr Lamont had been forced to make of mismanagement, of getting the finances of the country into a parlous state. Even now it was doubtful if he was making a dependable forecast or just indicating "green shoots" — the equivalent of pink elephants.

Mr Lamont had started last year by promising recovery would begin round the middle of the year. He said that output would increase by about 2 per cent and anticipated a revival in consumer confidence and a budget deficit of £8 billion. Output had fallen. There had been no revival in confidence and the deficit was £14 billion. His forecast had turned out to be "complete fiction".

People had lost jobs, businesses and homes, but the Chancellor said he would not have acted differently. He still regarded unemployment and recession as a price well worth paying. "He is sticking to his economic guns when they are trained on the people of his own country."

Labour would next week be

offering its alternative Budget. The country would see how they had a much better offer to make to all taxpayers and to people who wanted jobs, decent public services and health service, and not the bribes the government had offered.

Mr Kinnock said that borrowing for tax cuts for this generation left the next generation with debts and nothing else. "Borrowing for tax cuts does not provide the means of generating wealth or extra ways of producing revenues to pay for borrowing."

"The difference between borrowing for investment in the future and for immediate consumption is the difference between borrowing to pay for an extension on your house and borrowing to go away for a day at the races. That is what this government means to have, just a few weeks at the races before they come second."

If the Chancellor thought it was right to compromise our children's future and burden the rising generation with the cost of our generation's tax cuts, because a reduction of



Measure for measure: Neil Kinnock, at the dispatch box, gives his qualified welcome to the Chancellor's Budget

taxes now was the best way to stimulate the economy into recovery, then he was wrong even about that. Some of the money would be used to reduce the heavy burden of personal debt rather than increasing economic activity and much would be spent on imports and not on generating jobs in Britain.

The government knew that

and was still borrowing for tax cuts in an economy which had a rising balance of payments deficit in spite of tax cuts. That demonstrated the government's desperation and irresponsibility.

"If they did think that borrowing for tax cuts was an effective way to promote recovery, why had they not done it last year, when the

recession was already nine months old, instead of waiting until now when it was 21 months old? Why not do it with 50,000 more companies still in existence, 100,000 more families still in their homes and, most of all, without 800,000 more people still in their jobs?"

The answer is obvious. The Chancellor did not take

action to combat recession then because there was not going to be an election just weeks after the Budget. Now an election looms and borrowing, which was yesterday's original sin, has become today's prudent virtue. The only way in which the Chancellor could stop the obligation for the borrowing he proposed falling on the next

generation was by taking back next year with both hands what he was giving away this year with one hand.

Borrowing for tax cuts would not improve the economy, strengthen recovery or improve public services. If borrowing went into consumption, it would increase inflation. The British people did not want to join again the treadmill they had been on for 13 years. The present government had never been able to produce a resilient recovery and had always relied on consumption-led recoveries which the present Chancellor had gone for. "They have been wrong for 13 years. They will not start getting it right now." The British people would not be deceived. They would not support the bribes; they would support the builders.

Sir David Steel, for the Liberal Democrats, made a plea for release of local authority capital raised by the sale of council houses so that they could build new and improve old council houses. His party's alternative proposals would cut unemployment by 400,000 in the first year and 600,000 in the succeeding year. It cost the government £8,500 in benefit a year for each person unemployed. In all the waste of public expenditure, there was no greater waste than on paying unemployment benefit.

Lamont opts to seduce voters

By IVOR CREWE

IT'S opponents' comment of "those damned Conservatives" that re-elected him last month. Is the Chancellor bold enough to produce the necessary "split" in the Conservatives?

Mr Lamont's tactic problem was to produce a Budget in everyone's expected. One option was to bow decorum to the Conservative, as Butler did in 1987, and Lawson in 1987, almost equally tempting alternative was to opt for spurious prudence, as Jenkins did in 1970.

The Chancellor has gone something in between, closer to the prudent than the blatant end of the spectrum.

The Budget's centrepiece is the new 20 per cent rate, electorally clever. It lifts every taxpayer but income tax payers — skilled workers and of workers on whom both sides depend for votes — helped proportionately most. By "giving away" £5 billion rather than expected £3 billion, and forgoing the expected in the standard rate, the government can avoid the charge of bribery on which it has so effectively campaigned ("they borrow bribe, we borrow to"). By stealing what originally one of our fiscal policies, it wrongfooted the Opposition. Labour will either rein in their spend-plans even further or use a tax cut that particularly benefits the unemployed voters they need.

The main electoral fit of the 20 per cent is as a symbol of the government's long-term and of Conservative sophistry. By promoting a down-payment on or reductions in the sum term, the government is telling voters that April 9 they will be getting between 30 per cent tax under Labour or 20 per cent tax under Conservatives.

Defining party difference this way, the Conservatives are working with popular grain, reinforcing deep-seated belief that Conservative party taxes and Labour incomes them. Despite John Major's caution, people do not trust Labour on tax. In January Gallup said 58 per cent were "really convinced" by the claim to be able to move without raising for ordinary people, one per cent expected to pay tax and/or national insurance under a government while

only 6 per cent expected to pay less.

The credibility of Conservative claims to be on the way to a 20 per cent standard rate is less certain. The government's false predictions about the end of the recession and the widespread perception of Mr Lamont as a lightweight — he has one of the lowest ratings as a Chancellor in Gallup's 40-year records — do not help.

Nor do some of the more detailed measures. The above-inflationary increases in leaded petrol tax and vehicle excise duty will be particularly unpopular and will come into effect before the income tax reductions. They hit hardest precisely those who benefit most from the income tax reduction — modest income households struggling to run a family car.

Higher duty on tobacco and alcohol will be less popular, although most manual workers and their families smoke or drink. Other special measures will help the Conservatives more. The extra help on business rates and car tax will probably be the excuse that wavering small business people were looking for to vote Conservative again.

Was the Chancellor being electorally perverse to ignore the polls that consistently report overwhelmingly majorities of voters in favour of higher spending on pensions, schools and hospitals rather than tax cuts and, by smaller majorities, of reductions in VAT and poll tax rather than in income tax? Probably not.

Respondents know that higher spending is the "respectable" answer — how can one admit to putting personal tax benefits before help for the old and the sick? For another, when the question is couched in terms of the respondent's family's interest, the majority of spenders over cutters falls markedly. Moreover, the question simply asks people to rank order two desirable outcomes: they might genuinely prefer more public spending without objecting to tax cuts.

Voters who are still undecided will judge the government on its overall competence, not its specific measures. By embedding the 20 per cent tax proposal within the government's long-term strategy, Mr Lamont probably helped in this regard. He decided, probably wisely, to seduce the voters rather than buy them.

Ivor Crewe is professor of government at the University of Essex.

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INCOME TAX
Choice for couples

Lower paid offered incentive to earn more

By DAVID LIPSEY

NORMAN Lamont's new 20p rate of tax will do more for the less well off than the widely canvassed alternative of a 1p cut in the basic rate. They would, however, have gained more if he had raised tax thresholds by more than the rate of inflation.

Mr Lamont announced that four million people would pay tax at only the 20p rate. He argued that tax and national insurance take more than a third of any income

above the tax allowance earned by low paid workers, decreasing their incentive to earn more. The change will cut that rate to 29p in the pound.

The cut applies to the first £2,000 of taxable income above next year's £3,445 personal allowance and will reduce taxes by £100 a year for all single taxpayers earning more than £5,445 a year.

This is less effective than a straight rise in allowances, the independent Institute for Fiscal Studies said. Edward Whithouse, of the institute, said: "It is obviously better to raise allowances. That saves them all their taxes, while the reduced rate band saves them only 5p in the pound."

The Chancellor's income tax changes will do nothing for the worst off, he said. Up to a quarter of families pay no tax at all and are therefore unaffected.

The Institute said that a lower rate band benefited two-earner families, who would receive the benefit of the new lower rate on two salaries. As two-earner families were, on average, better off than one-earner families, this meant that the benefits of the cut were by no means focused on the worst off.

Pensioners who do not have substantial income other than from the state, and who rely on income support from the social security department will receive an extra £2 a week for a single pensioner and an extra £3 a week for married pensioners from the autumn.

The Chancellor has made one egalitarian decision at the other end of the scale. The limit for basic rate tax is currently £23,700 a year. If this had risen in line with inflation, the figure would have been £24,800 in the next tax year. Instead, it has been frozen, costing higher rate taxpayers about £165 a year - £65 more than the higher rate taxpayer will gain with the reduced rate band.

Some poor families 'worse off'

By JEREMY LAURANCE
SOCIAL SERVICES
CORRESPONDENT

PRESSURE groups for the low paid welcomed the new 20p rate band for people earning up to £2,000 over personal allowances, and the help for poorer pensioners.

But they deplored the lack of help for those under 65 who cannot work and gave warning that some families would be worse off.

Four million people earning up to £5,445 (for a single person) will see their income tax bills cut by a fifth, Mr Lamont said, worth £2.64 a week. But those on family credit have 70p worth withdrawn for every £1 reduction in tax, leaving them only 80p a week better off.

Calculations by the Low Pay Unit suggest that low income families will be £1.56 a week worse off as a result of the increase in tax on drink, cigarettes, petrol and car tax. The unit says those not receiving family credit will be £1 a week better off but 250,000 families receiving it will be about 76p worse off.

The Child Poverty Action Group said it was disappointed there was no increase in child benefit.



Give and take: the Kendalls will be helped by the new 20p tax band, although the cost of running their two cars will increase

Families say changes will make little difference

DAVID Kendall, a tyre fitter aged 44, and his 34-year-old wife Janet, who works for an accountancy firm, share the costs of their home and raising their three children, Paula, 13, Tina, 11 and Steven, eight.

He earns about £9,720 a year plus bonuses and his wife about £8,000, and another £97 a month comes into the household from child benefit. Both will benefit from the introduction of the 20p tax band which they believe will give them about £200 a year.

The costs of running their two cars, which both use leaded petrol, will increase as will the cost of their weekly night out and occasional visits to the pub on Sundays.

However, with the changes in the Budget so slight, they are looking for an upturn in the economy and a cut in the interest rate of their £22,300 mortgage to make a noticeable difference in their living standards. Mrs Kendall said: "It is a shame that he had to give the tax cuts to everybody, rather than just those

on low pay. But I do not see what else Mr Lamont could have done."

"We will have a bit more money but the amount will be so minimal that it will make little real difference. We are still in a position where it is difficult to make ends meet and cannot afford to replace our elderly car."

For Robert Chave, his wife and three children, the family purse will be little affected by the Budget. While the family who live in Totnes, Devon, will gain modestly from the introduction of the 20p income tax band, Mr Chave would rather have seen increases in personal allowances to promote incentives to work and help to get rid of the poverty trap.

Mr Chave, aged 40, group chief accountant with a china clay extraction company, would like to see that the government has taken away the VAT anomaly whereby if you took the extra salary instead of a car the VAT was payable on that.

three. "If we were both earning and our salaries equalled mine, we would pay considerably less tax. This is of course an incentive for my wife to go out to work and take a job which somebody else probably needs more."

With a mortgage of about £70,000, Mr Chave, who earns over £25,000, was not looking for an increase in the mortgage tax relief ceiling. "I believe it distorts the housing market and merely pushes up prices. I would like to see it abolished, which is really what is happening with it being frozen at its current rate."

The increase in the differential between the cost of leaded petrol and unleaded petrol is welcomed, especially since the family have decided to change their second car to one which runs on unleaded fuel.

Mr Chave added: "I have a company car and am pleased to see that the government has taken away the VAT anomaly whereby if you took the extra salary instead of a car the VAT was payable on that."



Robert Chave: welcoming company car changes

Lack of help for mother criticised

By JILL SHERMAN
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Budget disappointed working mothers who were expecting measures to help pay for child care, companies hoping for tax relief on capital spending, building societies looking for a boost in the housing market, and the unemployed.

An extension of the existing tax relief on workplace nurseries had been predicted and there had been speculation that child benefit would go up above inflation, mainly credit, for poorer families, would be raised. Mr Lamont gave nothing away in this area. This could reflect disagreement among ministers on the best way to help working mothers as well as the small amount of money available.

Angela Rumbold, the home office minister, and Grian Shephard, treasury minister, had urged wider tax relief to cover childcare outside the workplace. Tony Newton, social security secretary, fa-

CHILD CARE

vors targeting help towards poorer families. It is likely that proposals on childcare will be included in the on-coming manifesto.

Sue Slipman, director of the National Council for Parent Families, expressed disappointment about Mr Lamont's decision not to provide help in the Budget. He has failed to recognise the enormous demand that exists throughout the country, from both employers who wish to keep their valued members of staff, and on parents who want to return to work but cannot afford to do so, she said.

Although the measure to help small businesses are widely welcomed the Chancellor had been expected to announce tax relief on corporate capital spending, the building industry, was unhappy that there were no specific measures to ease construction firms.

Building societies wanted a boost to the housing market, such as a lifting of the limit on mortgage interest relief for first-time buyers. Subsidies for people rearing council flats, to help them buy in the open market also been rumoured.

MARRIED COUPLE, BOTH EARNING, ONE CHILD											
	1992/93	1991/92	1992/93	1991/92	1992/93	1991/92	1992/93	1991/92	1992/93	1991/92	1992/93
40,000 MORTGAGE											
GROSS ANNUAL INCOME	12,000	10,000	15,000	10,000	15,000	10,000	15,000	10,000	15,000	10,000	10,000
- Personal allowance	5,165	3,445	5,165	3,445	5,165	3,445	5,165	3,445	5,165	3,445	3,295
- Net mortgage interest	1,788	1,788	1,788	1,788	1,788	1,788	1,788	1,788	1,788	1,788	1,788
Taxable income	5,047	4,767	8,047	4,767	8,047	4,767	8,047	4,767	8,047	4,767	4,917
Tax thereon	1,009	1,009	1,748	1,175	2,532	1,538	2,532	1,538	2,532	1,538	2,256
NI contributions	883	523	883	523	1,153	703	1,153	703	1,153	703	1,153
Child benefit	0	482	0	456	0	456	0	456	0	456	0
NET INCOME	8,598	6,920	9,363	6,748	11,488	8,240	11,343	8,069	12,622	11,540	11,369
JOINT NET INCOME (tax %)	16,428	16,428	16,112	16,112	18,728	18,728	18,412	18,412	23,522	23,522	23,294
80,000 MORTGAGE											
GROSS ANNUAL INCOME	40,000	20,000	40,000	20,000	40,000	20,000	40,000	20,000	40,000	20,000	20,000
- Personal allowance	5,165	3,445	5,165	3,295	5,165	3,295	5,165	3,295	5,165	3,295	3,295
- Net mortgage interest	3,988	3,988	3,988	3,988	3,988	3,988	3,988	3,988	3,988	3,988	3,988
Taxable income	34,835	16,555	34,835	16,705	34,835	16,705	34,835	16,705	34,835	16,705	16,705
Tax thereon	10,279	4,058	10,438	4,175	15,278	10,438	15,278	10,438	15,278	10,438	12,127
NI contributions	1,699	1,699	1,699	1,699	1,699	1,699	1,699	1,699	1,699	1,699	1,699
Child benefit	0	482	0	456	0	456	0	456	0	456	0
NET INCOME	28,022	14,840	27,925	14,869	40,022	27,816	38,925	27,897	52,022	38,816	36,933
JOINT NET INCOME (tax %)	42,862	42,862	42,862	42,862	67,838	67,838	67,838	67,838	81,838	81,838	81,838

MARRIED COUPLE, NON-WORKING WIFE, TWO CHILDREN											
	1992/93	1991/92	1992/93	1991/92	1992/93	1991/92	1992/93	1991/92	1992/93	1991/92	1992/93
40,000 MORTGAGE											
GROSS ANNUAL INCOME	15,000	15,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
- Personal allowance	5,165	5,015	5,165	5,015	5,165	5,015	5,165	5,015	5,165	5,015	5,015
- Net mortgage interest	3,575	3,575	3,575	3,575	3,575	3,575	3,575	3,575	3,575	3,575	3,575
Taxable income	6,260	6,410	11,260	11,410	11,260	11,410	11,260	11,410	11,260	11,410	11,410
Tax thereon	1,232	1,232	2,252	2,252	2,252	2,252	2,252	2,252	2,252	2,252	2,252
NI contributions	1,153	1,153	1,153	1,153	1,153	1,153	1,153	1,153	1,153	1,153	1,153
Child benefit	872	840	872	840	872	840	872	840	872	840	840
NET INCOME	12,380	12,183	15,699	15,483	19,314	19,288	22,884	22,765	25,894	25,765	25,765
JOINT NET INCOME (tax %)	24,760	24,366	31,398	30,966	38,628	38,576	45,768	45,530	51,688	51,530	51,530
80,000 MORTGAGE											
GROSS ANNUAL INCOME	45,000	45,000	60,000	60,000	100,000	100,000	140,000	140,000	180,000	180,000	180,000
- Personal allowance	5,165	5,015	5,165	5,015	5,165	5,015	5,165	5,015	5,165	5,015	5,015
- Net mortgage interest	7,975	7,975	7,975	7,975	7,975	7,975	7,975	7,975	7,975	7,975	7,975
Taxable income	31,860	32,010	46,860	47,010	86,860	87,010	126,860	127,010	166,860	167,010	167,010
Tax thereon	9,279	9,279	15,278	15,278	25,278	25,278	45,278	45,278	65,278	65,278	65,278
NI contributions	1,699	1,699	1,699	1,699	1,699	1,699	1,699	1,699	1,699	1,699	1,699
Child benefit	872	840	872	840	872	840	872	840	872	840	840
NET INCOME	22,884	22,765	31,884	31,765	55,884	55,765	85,884	85,765	115,884	115,765	115,765
JOINT NET INCOME (tax %)	45,768	45,530	63,768	63,530	111,768	111,530	171,768	171,530	231,768	231,530	231,530

MARRIED COUPLE, 55-74											
	1992/93	1991/92	1992/93	1991/92	1992/93	1991/92	1992/93	1991/92	1992/93	1991/92	1992/93
NO MORTGAGE											
INCOME (PENSIONS)	8,307	1,693	8,307	1,625	13,307	1,693	13,307	1,625	13,307	1,693	1,625
- Personal allowance	5,165	4,200	5,165	4,200	5,165	4,200	5,165	4,200	5,165	4,200	4,200
Taxable income	3,142	0	3,142	0	8,142	0	8,142	0	8,142	0	0
Tax thereon	328	0	328	0	1,561	0	1,561	0	1,561	0	0
NET INCOME	7,979	1,693	7,979	1,625	11,746	1,693	11,746	1,625	11,746	1,693	1,625
JOINT NET INCOME (tax %)	9,714	9,714	9,714	9,714	13,439	13,439	13,439	13,439	13,439	13,439	13,439
80,000 MORTGAGE											
INCOME (PENSIONS)	13,307	1,693	13,307	1,625	23,307	1,693	23,307	1,625	23,307	1,693	1,625
- Personal allowance	5,165	4,200	5,165	4,200	5,165	4,200	5,165	4,200	5,165	4,200	4,200
Taxable income	8,142	0	8,142	0	18,142	0	18,142	0	18,142	0	0
Tax thereon	1,699	0	1,699	0	3,699	0	3,699	0	3,699	0	0
NET INCOME	11,608	1,693	11,608	1,625	19,608	1,693	19,608	1,625	19,608	1,693	1,625
JOINT NET INCOME (tax %)	21,322	21,322	21,322	21,322	25,047	25,047	25,047	25,047	25,047	25,047	25,047

MARRIED COUPLE, OVER 75												
	1992/93		1991/92		1992/93		1991/92		1992/93		1991/92	
NO MORTGAGE	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife
INCOME (PENSIONS)	8,307	1,693	8,375	1,625	10,807	1,633	10,875	1,625	13,307	1,693	13,375	1,625
- Personal allowance	8,875	4,370	9,575	4,180	5,875	4,370	6,575	4,180	8,875	4,370	9,575	4,180
Taxable income	1,432	0	1,800	0	3,932	0	4,300	0	4,432	0	4,800	0
Tax thereon	286	0	450	0	883	0	1,075	0	1,508	0	1,700	0
NET INCOME	8,021	1,693	7,925	1,625	9,924	1,693	9,800	1,625	11,798	1,693	11,675	1,625
JOINT NET INCOME (tax %)	9,714	(-36.44)	9,550		11,617	(-17.86)	11,425		12,482	(-11.29)	13,306	
80,000 MORTGAGE												
INCOME (PENSIONS)	13,307	1,693	13,375	1,625	18,307	1,693	18,375	1,625	23,307	1,693	23,375	1,625
+ Investment income	6,000	4,000	6,000	4,000	6,000	4,000	6,000	4,000	6,000	4,000	6,000	4,000
- Personal allowance	5,165	4,370	5,015	4,180	5,165	4,370	5,015	4,180	5,165	4,370	5,015	4,180
Taxable income	14,142	1,323	14,360	1,445	19,142	1,323	19,360	1,323	24,142	1,445	24,360	1,323
Tax thereon	3,436	263	3,590	361	4,696	265	4,840	361	6,002	265	6,189	361
NET INCOME	15,871	5,428	15,785	5,264	19,421	5,428	19,535	5,264	23,305	5,428	23,181	5,264
JOINT NET INCOME (tax %)	21,299	(-6.33)	21,049		25,641	(-4.81)	24,793		28,733	(-4.32)	28,455	

Gas attack on de Klerk backfires on opponents

FROM RAY KENNEDY IN JOHANNESBURG

THE uneasy right-wing alliance formed to campaign for a "no" vote in next week's whites-only referendum on South African constitutional reform appeared yesterday to have suffered a setback after a tear-gas attack on President de Klerk in Monday evening.

The extremist Afrikaner Resistance Movement (AWB) formed an alliance with the right-wing Conservative party, the official white parliamentary opposition, and the Herstig Nasionale party.

The students' representative council at Orange Free State University in Bloemfontein, where the attack occurred, said it would demand that the right of the neo-fascist AWB to operate on the

campus should be withdrawn, and strong disciplinary action be taken against those responsible. Conrad Louw, the students' council president, said that a few fanatics had managed to disrupt Mr de Klerk's visit to the campus, but he believed that the majority of students and staff condemned it.

Carl Werth, the Natal provincial leader of the Conservative party, was clearly embarrassed yesterday when he was challenged during a public debate in Durban by Roger Burrows, a Democratic party MP, to condemn the tear-gas attack and the bombing of white schools where parents have voted to admit black pupils.

The Durban area is a key constituency in the referendum campaign, where the government and the right-wing alliance are working hard to secure the critical English-speaking vote. Mr Burrows said he had asked right-wing MPs to condemn the school bombings, but "not one of them has had the guts to do so".

Mr Werth replied that he was "very disappointed and distressed" by the tear-gas attack. He added: "I will gladly speak out against any form of violence. I deplore the bombing of schools, even if the targets are safe targets."

Dr Felco Boomstra, rector of Orange Free State University, said it was not clear who was to blame for the tear-gas attack. He added: "We regret this type of incident, as we believe that a university should be a place where we can think responsibly and consider problems rationally."

The tear-gas canister was thrown into a crowded cafeteria where Mr de Klerk was about to address students. He had arrived to shout in Afrikaans of "Go home, traitor" from students outside. Mr de Klerk and his wife, Marika, were hustled to safety, but Kobie Coetsee, the justice minister, was knocked about and is suffering from bruised ribs.

● **Traffic killings:** At least three people were stabbed to death and 12 injured when gangs of men rampaged through black commuter trains bound from Soweto to Johannesburg yesterday. Police said that in Alexandra township, north of Johannesburg, the bodies of two men were found, and a man was killed in Germiston, east of Johannesburg.

Plane buzzes East Timor peace ship

Darwin An Indonesian military aircraft buzzed a Portuguese peace ship at less than 100ft as it steamed towards East Timor and the Indonesian navy, which was threatening to block its passage.

The Lusitania Express is carrying about 150 protesters whose aim is to lay wreaths at the Santa Cruz cemetery in the East Timorese capital of Dili, where at least 50 people at a memorial ceremony were massacred by Indonesian soldiers in November. (AFP)

Palestinian shot

Gaza Israeli soldiers shot dead Ali Ibrahim al-Mugharbi, a Palestinian who injured four soldiers at a Gaza Strip checkpoint. Palestinians said he drove into them trying to avoid being stopped for a carfence. (Reuters)

Prison sued

Peking Wang Juntao, aged 33, one of China's most prominent dissidents, is suing Qinghai prison in Peking for detaining him illegally and allowing him to contract hepatitis B while he was detained there. (AFP)

Hosage blow

Beirut Iran has stopped efforts to free two German hostages in Lebanon and says Bonn must negotiate with the kidnappers because it has not released two jailed Lebanese brothers, a pro-Iranian source said. (Reuters)

Southern Africans drop ivory plea

FROM JOANNA PITMAN IN KYOTO

Under pressure from America, the European Community and other Western nations, five southern African nations yesterday withdrew their proposals at the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species conference in Kyoto, for a partial resumption of the ivory trade.

Delegates from Namibia, Botswana, Malawi, Zimbabwe and South Africa walked away from yesterday's Cites conference and sat down at a table to discuss the future of the elephant. This conference appears to have produced little constructive use for the future of the African elephant and has merely drawn veiled threats from southern African nations that they could leave Cites and resume ivory trading independently.

All five of the southern African countries have evidence of sustained success in conservation of elephants, to the extent that they now suffer from a problem of elephant overpopulation. They had proposed the resumption of a limited trade in ivory at sustainable levels to bring in revenue for funding anti-poaching units and other long-term conservation programmes.

A spokesman for the southern African nations said: "Our proposal has been shot down for the wrong reasons. It is obvious that consideration by some delegates is being given to

political pressure and an election fever in their own countries."

The British government, which had supported limited trade in elephant hides and meat to provide an economic incentive for conservation, performed a volte face three weeks ago after it had come under pressure from environmental lobby groups which claimed that it was "failing the elephant". Its revised position advocated a continued total ban on all trade in all elephant products.

"We are overrun with elephants so we should be able to utilise our elephant populations in a sustainable way. Yet we have been asked to burn ivory when we have trouble feeding our own people," said a delegate from Botswana. "We are extremely perplexed. It seems that the goalsposts have been moved."

Debate over the past ten days in Kyoto has alienated southern African nations from the Cites forum. It has also made it clear that the future of the African elephant and many other endangered species is pegged to the mood swings of Western electorates. "We will have to reconsider the costs and the benefits of remaining within Cites," a Botswana delegate said. His comment encouraged fears in some quarters that the disappointed African nations could leave the convention, and resume ivory trading alone.

Britain yesterday announced a \$1 million (£580,000) pledge for elephant conservation in Africa.



High flyer: Mizue Ito being tossed into the air by student colleagues after she passed the entrance examination, one of the toughest in Japan, for Tokyo university. Out of 9,959 applicants, only 3,228 were admitted

Soldiers abduct refugees

FROM AHMED FAZI IN DHAKA

ABOUT 300 Muslim refugees were abducted from two boats by Burmese soldiers as they were crossing the border into Bangladesh, refugee sources in the southeastern border town of Teknaf said yesterday.

The refugees claim that Burmese soldiers have killed hundreds of Muslims and detained thousands in the western state of Arakan in the past two weeks. A spokesman for the Rohingya Solidarity Organisation, which monitors refugee movements, said that the boats were intercepted by the soldiers at Nakhongdia military outpost on the Naf river close to the Burmese-Bangladesh border on Monday.

The organisation said that the refugees belonged to the Muslim Rohingya tribe and included 40 children and 35 women who were fleeing persecution in the western Burmese province of Arakan. The refugees had been taken to an unknown destination by the soldiers who seized the boats, the group said.

Eiger conquered by Frenchwoman

Catherine Destivelle, aged 32, has become the first woman to climb alone the north face of the Eiger, one of the most dangerous ascents in the Alps. The French mountaineer completed the 12,108ft climb in 17 hours, reaching the summit shortly before midnight on Monday.

The former football star Vic Halom will be a Liberal Democrat candidate in the town where he was an FA Cup hero 19 years ago. Mr Halom, aged 43, is to contest Labour-held Sunderland North, which includes Roker Park, ground of the town's Second Division club, with whom he was striker when the team took the League title in 1973.

Prince Henri d'Orleans, the pretender to the French crown, is quoted as having scolded his daughter Chantal for breaking a 600-year tradition keeping women members of the royal family out of politics. The daily *Le Figaro* said he sharply rebuked her for a speech condemning proposals by the far-right National Front to send foreign workers back home. "As long

as the head of the House of France is alive, he alone expresses its thinking and leads its policies," he said.

The former editor of *The Sun* and the *Daily Express*, Sir Larry Lamb, was improving in an Australian hospital after suffering a heart attack and lapsing into a coma. A spokeswoman for the hospital in Sydney said he was regaining consciousness and was off the critical list.

Delicatessen assistant Emma Chancelier, aged 24, has become Sainsbury's 35,000th employee to gain a certificate in safe food handling.

Eight-times-married band-leader Artie Shaw, whose wives included actresses Ava Gardner and Lana Turner, is to take part in his first concert in Britain in June later this year, aged 81. Dubbed the Sheikh of Swing, he will conduct at the Royal Festival Hall on June 11. "I'm not an expert on marriage, I'm an expert on divorce," he says. "The easiest way to get one is to call a cab. When a situation is intolerable you leave."

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Chill winds of capitalist competition buffet Russian media



Yakovlev: issued plea for co-operation

THE central media of the Commonwealth of Independent States—radio, television and the Moscow-based press which were taken over by Russia on the dissolution of the Soviet Union, face imminent bankruptcy unless they find alternative sources of funding. With the options reduced to doubling subscription prices, finding a Western "fairy-godmother" or begging for charity, most are likely to have ceased publication or succumbed to disadvantageous mergers before the month is out.

Pravda, for decades the official voice of the Communist party but now officially independent, recently reduced publication from six days a week to three, as have at least three other central news- papers in its stable. It is predicted that they will become weeklies, or close.

The old propaganda channels are paying for being the first area of Soviet life to face market realities, Mary Dejevsky writes from Moscow

Former central television, whose two main channels have been taken over by Russia and made semi-independent, is also in financial trouble. Yegor Yakovlev, the head of broadcasting appointed after the August coup, says that if other former Soviet republics do not help to finance a commonwealth channel, the first and second channels will have to merge.

While arguing passionately for joint funding and a joint body to oversee the former "first" channel, he concedes that other republics are showing little interest. Ukraine, central broadcasting officials say, has switched 15 transmitters over to different frequencies, and Moldavia three, depriving several areas of access to central television. Elsewhere, Mr Yakovlev admits, local authorities are diverting central channels for their own purposes, or simply switching off Moscow transmissions. The Crimea, which

is populated mainly by Russians, cannot receive Moscow radio's main Russian-language programme, *Mayak*. Mr Yakovlev argues that it made cultural and economic sense to preserve a centrally co-ordinated network, which could share foreign correspondents and collaborate on buying programmes from abroad. Other republics, however, suspect Russia of cultural imperialism.

The Russian authorities wrested central television's second channel from central control after the August coup and took over the first channel when the Soviet Union ceased its existence. Russia then reached agreement with other former Soviet republics to co-operate on a joint television channel, but there have

been bitter arguments about how the time and money should be divided. The plight of the former central media offers a warning of what is likely to happen across the entire state industrial sector in coming months as market reforms start to bite and individual commonwealth republics pursue their independence in every way open to them.

The media were one of the first areas of Soviet life to be exposed to market reforms and competition when the policy of glasnost permitted the establishment of newspapers and journals outside the state system. The new press had to struggle to survive, buying paper at extortionate black-market prices and paying staff more to compensate

for the insecurity. Having fought to survive, the formerly unofficial press and Russian radio and television are now fiercer than their state counterparts. Here, only *Izvestiya* looks reasonably healthy. The newspaper has attracted widespread advertising and started commercial projects with foreign partners. It is also able to let office space.

The shake-out promises to be short, sharp and ruthless. Russia will probably be reduced to a small number of central newspapers—the Russian government paper, two Moscow dailies, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* and *Izvestiya*—a selection of weeklies, and the thriving local press that has sprung to life in the past two years.

Nato may win peacekeeper role in east Europe

FROM GEORGE BROCK IN BRUSSELS

IN THE shadow of the increasingly bloody civil war in Nagorno-Karabakh, America, Europe and Russia yesterday cautiously endorsed proposals that Nato troops should be offered as peacekeepers when fresh conflicts erupt in Eastern Europe or the old Soviet Union.

Opponents of Yeltsin join forces

Moscow: More than 20 groups opposed to President Yeltsin and his reformist government have formed an alliance which, they hope, will make their uphill campaign against the Russian leadership more effective (Mary Dejevsky writes).

In a combative joint declaration, published yesterday on the front page of the headline newspaper, *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, the groups set out five principles and their slogan: "justice, people, statehood and patriotism".

The group's principles are calculated to appeal to the former communist elite, the poor and those who want to make Russia great again. Yesterday's declaration cemented an alliance between the extreme right nationalist movements and the diehard communists, which has developed since the collapse of the Soviet Union. But Mr Yeltsin still tops all the opinion polls.

Reforms off

Nairobi: President Moi of Kenya has withdrawn constitutional reforms to create an executive post of prime minister and introduce direct presidential elections. Parliament had been due to debate the reforms this week. Kenya is expected this year to hold its first multiparty elections in more than 20 years. (AFP)

Greek strike

Athens: More than 200,000 Greek public-sector workers began a two-day strike to demand that the conservative government drop public sector wage freezes. Trains, state banks, post offices and the public works and water corporations were halted. Tax collectors and customs agents walked out. (AP)

Offer to region

Warsaw: Ethnic Germans from Ukraine, who were deported by Stalin during the second world war, are free to return and form an "autonomous region", Leonid Kravchuk, the Ukrainian president has said. (AFP)

Cyanide threat

Hamburg: Erich Honecker, the former East German leader, has a capsule of cyanide and has threatened to commit suicide if extradited from Moscow to Germany, the weekly magazine *Stern* reported. (AFP)

yet more broadly based than the European Community, which anyway has no military forces. The latest suggestions to extend Nato's role are liable to meet opposition from France, which does not wish to expand any body likely to preserve America's diplomatic and military power inside Europe.

Hans van den Broek, the Dutch foreign minister, told yesterday's meeting here that Nato should be ready to act for the largest of the international security councils, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. James Baker, the American Secretary of State, praised what he called "constructive" ideas on the divisions of labour between proliferating European institutions dealing with security but said that no firm decision had been made about future Nato peacekeeping deployment.

While the Warsaw Pact linked the old Soviet Union to its East European satellites, Nato avoided any suggestion that it might operate outside its own borders except in wartime. The alliance has now created the "North Atlantic Co-operation Council" to link Nato, eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States on defence matters. The council grew to 35 members yesterday with the addition of 11 of the commonwealth republics.

The new co-operation council has been accused of risking confusion and duplication as various bodies with overlapping membership jostle for influence. Roland Dumas, the French foreign minister, said yesterday that the purpose of Nato's new creation was unclear. But Mr van den Broek said that the new body would help Nato to overcome its political difficulties in intervening outside its own territory.

Boris Yeltsin, deputy prime minister of the new government, said yesterday that the purpose of the new creation was unclear. But Mr van den Broek said that the new body would help Nato to overcome its political difficulties in intervening outside its own territory.

Rafael Gusseinov, an official of the Azerbaijani mission in Moscow, said that the parliament had decided to postpone its session "to allow passions to cool". (AP)

MP quits over war killings

FROM REUTERS IN POTSDAM

A SOCIAL Democrat politician from eastern Germany gave up his parliamentary seat and left politics yesterday after admitting he took part in firing squads killing civilians in the second world war.

Gustav Just, aged 70, said he was resigning because of the uproar over his past: "I want to avoid damage to my (governing) party and the state of Brandenburg. As a private citizen, I will now seek to clarify the events of 1941."

The German Sunday newspaper, *Welt am Sonntag*, reported that Herr Just had been a member of a firing squad that killed six Jews during the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941. On Monday, he admitted involvement in the killings but said he still had no idea whether they were Jews.



Princely power: a Parisian looking at one of yesterday's advertisements in praise of the Prince of Wales's intervention in defence of French cheese

Bears fight eagles as Russia hunts for sign of the times

FROM MARY DEJEVSKY IN MOSCOW

THE eagles took on the bears in Moscow yesterday—and they were not flinching with the fashion for American football. They were arguing in deadly earnest about the new Russia's heraldic crest.

The eagles had the advantage of a parliamentary committee on their side, much preparatory work which had produced three golden birds of the double-headed strain, and a powerful uncensored of nostalgia for the tsarist empire. The bears had a splendid bearded spokesman in the person of Veniamin Pokhlebkin, respected expert on Russian cookery who, it transpired, had long concealed his real passion, heraldry. Mr Pokhlebkin carried with him the more earthy lobbyists, who argued for the bear as the older, more populist, more genuine symbol of the Russian nation.

To support his argument, he produced a fetching miniature of a black bear on red ground, enclosed in gold laurel leaves. It was passed respectfully around the assembled throng to wide-eyed admiration.

Yesterday was the penultimate stage in deciding what the new crest should be: an open parliamentary hearing at which all and sundry, but especially the "experts", were invited to testify. Fur and feathers flew liberally.

The "back to basics" crowd supported the eagle. The purists favoured the eagle. The bear, they argued, had never been a symbol of "statehood". And anyway, someone said, what would the bear do for our foreign relations?

The argument then revolved about what sort of eagle. Two heads were taken for granted, but what sort of heads, and what about the tail and claws? One of the



heraldic specialists said that the choice was open—successive tarsi had altered the appearance of the eagle, so the new Russians were entitled to do the same.

Misgivings were voiced about the unadorned bear. This was the crest of the post-tsarist, pre-bolshevik provi-

sional government—"and there is nothing provisional about the present Russian regime". There was a general move to take another look at the bear.

The matter of the crest, like that of the national anthem (Glinka's melody, so far no words), has tended to become bogged down in detail. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, however, it is not only a matter of detail, but a desire to ensure that the new crest has more staying power than the hammer and sickle. A Russian heraldic service has been reconstituted to pursue this aim.

Yesterday's result, by the way, was a marginal victory for the eagles, with a few games yet to play.

French praise royal blue vein

FROM PHILIP JACOBSON IN PARIS

IT MAY be a case of *les-majestés*, it may simply be infernal cheek, but the makers of Roquefort cheese have undoubtedly pulled off a priceless publicity coup with the unwitting assistance of the Prince of Wales.

Full-page advertisements in yesterday's Parisian newspapers reproduced his unstinting praise of "the sturdy Roquefort" in a recent speech assailing European Community bureaucrats for meddling with choice and ancient ingredients of the French national diet.

"Thank you Charles, God Save the Queen and Roquefort Society," ran the copy in *Le Figaro* and *Libération*, under an extract from the speech about the perils of "emasculating" the pride of the Auvergne.

No need, evidently, for any of that royal warrant business on this side of the Channel, where the prince is already held in considerable esteem on account of his robust views on modern architecture and the protection of the environment, not to mention his readiness to make speeches in (perfectly adequate) French.

The address that Roquefort makers have seized upon with such delight was delivered before a sizeable Anglo-French gathering in Paris last week, and it must have stirred every patriotic heart on the French side of the house.

In a free-ranging assault on the folly of imposing "bacteriological correctness" on the richness and variety of France's food, the prince singled out no less than seven other native cheeses from "pongy Pont l'Évêque" to "malformed Gruyère de Comté" by way of Brie de Meaux and Fournet d'Ambert, Crottin de Chabignol, Camembert and Vacherin.

As the prince will certainly have been aware, this sort of thing goes down exceptionally well among the French, especially when they suspect the worst from Brussels. No friend of the European Community, *Le Figaro* could hardly contain itself, reporting the royal speech next day under a headline reading: "Le God save the brie de Charles d'Angleterre."

At that moment, General De Gaulle's heartfelt observation to a colleague somehow came to mind: "My dear friend, one cannot simply hope to rally on the spot a nation that produces 265 different specialities of cheese."

Rome sportsmen fail TV hurdle

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN ROME

ITALIAN television viewers are being deprived of their normal diet of sport and soap operas and sportsmen are running as candidates in next month's general election, television critics complained yesterday.

The state-run broadcasting authority, Rai, has been accused of double standards for cancelling at the last minute on Saturday night the screening of a boxing match starring Francesco Damiani, the former world heavy weight champion who is now running as a candidate for the opposition Republican party. Sports fans also were deprived of coverage of a mini-marathon run at Monza on Sunday because Gelindo Bordin, the Olympic gold medal marathon runner, was among those taking part.

Guidelines issued by a parliamentary watchdog committee responsible for the state-run channels forbid candidates from appearing on television except during allotted broadcast time. However critics say that Rai breaches the rules by giving government figures, such as Giulio Andreotti, the prime minister, open coverage on television news, especially on the first channel, TG1, which is controlled by the dominant Christian Democrat party.

A commentator for the newspaper *La Repubblica*, Milián Mafai, yesterday said that it was a "grotesque measure" to cancel coverage of Paolo Cane, the Italian tennis player, during his scheduled Davis Cup appearance in Brazil at the end of the month. Mafai said she had also sought in vain to watch a film on

Saturday night, promised to viewers only a few hours before, because it starred Gian-Maria Volonté, the popular actor and a candidate for the Democratic Party of the Left (formerly Communist). Signor Volonté is well known for his roles in thrillers about the Mafia.

Also banished from the small screen are the soap opera films made by Alessandra Mussolini, the neo-fascist candidate in Naples, and blue movie featuring Moana Pozz, the stripper who heads the list of the Party of Love.

Gianni Pasquarelli, the director-general of Rai, defended the policy yesterday. "We are only applying faithfully the directives of the parliamentary commission of vigilance on Rai," he said. "We have been doing this for many years. Certainly if there is a sporting result that features in athlete political candidate, the news will be given." Signor Pasquarelli said.

Private television stations run by Silvio Berlusconi, the Milanese media yoon, also have been criticised for what some see as a bias against the Socialist party.



Andreotti: open TV coverage criticised

Dispirited Albania prepares to vote

FROM JAMES PETTIFER IN TIRANA

GJEKE Rama is in his garden in the north Albanian mountain village of Derreg. He is aged 79, a Kuytar, the head of a family clan.

"We have our livestock, yes," he says. "Without them we could not live." Fierce black pigs root outside his gate. Below them is the stony wilderness of his valley leading to the wild Trepçe district adjoining Montenegro. "We eat meat about once every two

weeks. There is no cheese here since October. We eat these." He offers me a handrolled cigarette.

Western and Turkish food aid has been enough to keep the Albanian cities fairly quiet this winter, despite serious violence last week in the southern mining city of Pogorelec when two people were killed, but most highland villages are much worse off and close to despair.

Gjeke's grandchildren look reasonably healthy but elsewhere in the village there are all the classic signs of malnutrition and its associated diseases. Doctors in the northern capital of Shkodra, 40 miles away, report a sharp increase in the infant mortality rate this winter, with many pregnant women suffering serious dietary deficiencies.

All the Derreg villagers say that there is widespread corruption led by urban mafias, which is diverting the food aid from the most needy recipients. It is difficult to tell how far they are right.

The heavy dark green Italian army lorries of "Operation Pelican" lunge around rural Albania and try to distribute staples such as rice and flour even-handedly, but the Italian officials do not disguise the difficulties they face, or the fact that they had hoped originally to have been withdrawn from Albania by now. What happens to the food when they have left a district is anybody's guess.

Many observers in Tirana believe the socialists have lost the will to govern: the general election on March 22 will show whether they are right.

ZAGREB NOTEBOOK by Anne McElvoy

Right number, shame about the name

What is a telephone directory? The answer that it is a listing of the subscribers and the telephone numbers allotted to them is not satisfactory in Croatia, where the main daily *Vjesnik* has called for the editor of the new Zagreb telephone book to be dismissed for not appreciating the significance of his task.

His misdemeanour has been to continue including listings of company names in Zagreb beginning with the abhorred prefix Yugo—even now that the republic has gained independence on the theory that, like it or not, they still existed. The result, thunders *Vjesnik*, is a listing "brimming over with Yugoslavia. This is the first telephone directory of the independent and sovereign republic with historical connotations." It concludes: "This telephone directory should

be a civilisational event reflecting the general trends in our political, economic and cultural life in Croatia."

Belgrade meanwhile is re-discovering dusty heroes hand over fist these days, presumably to compensate for the inadequacy of its present canon. After devoting eulogies to the assassin of Archduke Ferdinand, Gavril Princip, those sections of the media sympathetic to Slobodan Milosevic's regime have taken up the cause of another fated son of Serbia—the failed assassin of Marshal Tito, Nikola Kavaja.

A devout anti-communist, Kavaja spent 14 years trying to assassinate the Yugoslav leader but his attempts were more reminiscent of Woody Allen than the Jackal. He tried to dispatch Tito outside the Waldorf Astoria in

New York, in Mexico City and in Virginia and was foiled by nimble security men or his own cackhandledness. He is still languishing in prison in Virginia after trying to blow up the Yugoslav consulate there (with Tito inside) and



Tito: target of bungling hitman

his cell, where he is serving a 65-year sentence. Kavaja declared: "To take the life of Josip Broz (Tito), that Austro-Hungarian communist responsible for the greatest tragedy ever to befall the Serbian people, and then to commit heroic suicide by crashing an aeroplane into the Communist party central committee building in Belgrade."

Kavaja has pleaded to be set free, arguing that he is no longer a danger to anyone now that Tito is dead.

He can at least take comfort in the news that Tito, a notorious womaniser, is about to acquire the tribute that he deserves for his extra-political activities. His luxury villa in Lovcenka, on the Montenegrin coast, is to be turned into a private clinic which will specialise in artificial insemination.

مكتبة المصطفى

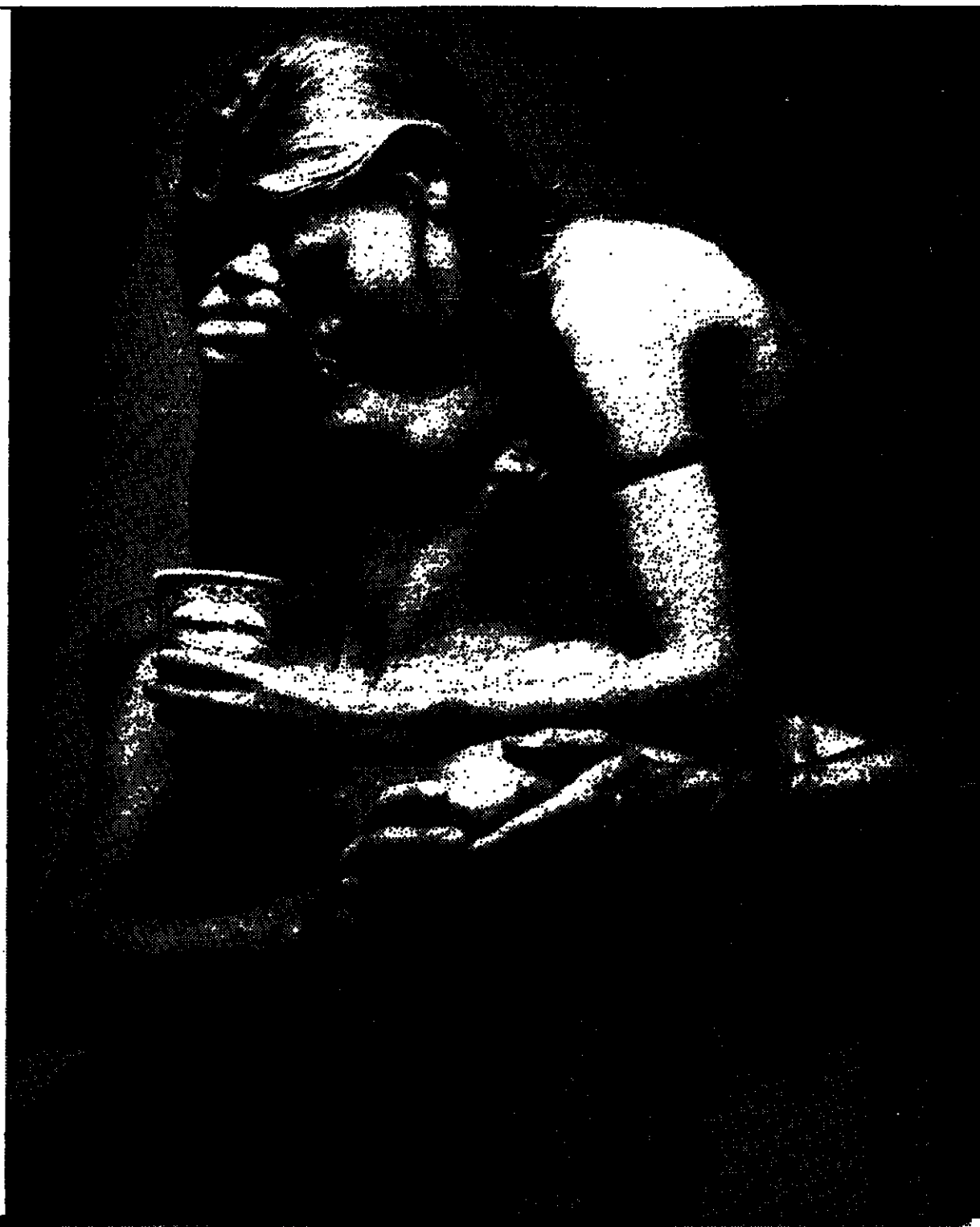
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intense
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the finest ingredients
combined with
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cream that is
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A global peril we dare not ignore

Britain is leading the world debate on the environment, says Michael Heseltine

In June the leaders of 175 countries are invited to attend the world's greatest ever debate on the planet's prospects of survival. Some 40,000 people are expected in Rio for the Earth Summit of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. Last week in New York, where the final preparatory meeting was underway, I found the scale of the endeavour awe-inspiring. In order to have available for ministerial signature the necessary documents for such an ambitious event, the negotiators of the 175 countries involved have been meeting, at major cities across the world, for months.

I have two overriding views about what is happening. The first is of its transcending importance. I am not a scientist but I do not see how any responsible government can ignore the scientific advice so heavily stacked on the side of those forecasting dramatic deterioration in the world environment. I am moved in reaching this judgment by the example set by Mrs Thatcher as prime minister. She was a scientist, which gave her an added advantage over most of us confronted with these decisions. She was certainly no easy touch for those fashionable fads should come along or for the special pleadings of this or that pressure group. Yet so convinced was she by the advice of our scientists that she played a critical role in persuading the world to sign the Montreal Protocol which led to the early phasing out of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). She recognised early on too the importance of heeding scientific warnings about global warming.

I am equally impressed by the brave decision of John Major who was the first world leader to commit himself to attend the Rio conference in person. Prime ministers rarely take such a step unless they are confident of the outcome. Yet this is a conference so diverse, so ambitious, that no one can be confident of success in advance. Someone had to show a lead, to take a risk. Such was the prime minister's conviction about the urgency of the environmental threat that he was big enough to do just that.

I have seen enough of the workings of diplomacy to know that nothing is more likely to deliver a successful outcome than the presence of the bosses of the governments concerned. Nothing so encourages the officials on either side to go the extra mile.

In the charged atmosphere of media politics it is almost impossible for events to match expectations. Rio will not live up to those of its more ardent advocates. But this would be the wrong judgment. Rio is a part of a process not an isolated event. What matters is that a sufficiently clear form of words emerges to give momentum to the dialogue and to the promise upon which the survival of the planet depends.

We will not solve all the problems at Rio. We may agree they should be solved. We may put in place machinery that could solve them if we operate it with determination. We are engaged on a long and unpredictable journey. It will be an achievement just to have got the show on the road.

I believe that Britain has a contribution to make to maintaining this momentum through the mechanisms for monitoring environmental progress

which we have pioneered in our White Paper, *This Common Inheritance*. I shall shortly be letting the UN Secretary General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, have our ideas on how the UN might take the process forward from Rio.

My second overriding concern may sound hard-nosed. In a sense it is. But if we do not understand the need for real and effective policies, the process will lead nowhere. We are not engaged in a search for further ways of distributing aid from the developed to the developing world. This is not a hand-out. This is a deal. And in order to work, any deal has to be two ways.

We in the developed world have to recognise that we are the major consumers of the world's natural resources. We must question more and more how our development is sustainable. There can be no escaping our responsibility to put our own house in order. Britain will not shrink that challenge. Nor should other developed countries. I was pleased to tell the preparatory conference that Britain will look again at its commitment to stabilise CO₂ emissions at 1990 levels by the year 2005 to see if we can bring that target forward. In addition, we are rich enough to help the rest of the world meet its environmental commitments, and are prepared to contribute new and additional resources for this purpose.

But what of the other side? A fellow environment minister from a less affluent country recently said to me: "You must remember that my constituents are cold and are hungry. The environment ranks nowhere in their calculations." He didn't go on to point out, as he might have done, that it didn't rate very highly in our agenda either, or that we are guilty of harming our environment in ways that we are now suggesting the developing countries should cease to harm theirs. Still, developing countries too must play their part in a global deal. The South in pursuing the development it needs cannot afford to ignore the scientists' warnings. In exchange for extra resources and know-how, developing countries will have to provide firm commitments to action and bring a disciplined approach to bear. That is not exploitation. It is the best possible deal for the world's environment.

If Rio is to lead anywhere, it has to be in terms of setting, monitoring and delivering what each country commits to the global process. That is not easy when every country in the world has different environmental problems and varying capacities to respond to them. We are not looking for a pattern imposed from outside on any country. Each must have its own approach and answers. But whatever they are, they must not be vague assertions, but firm and intelligent proposals. Just as the money can be counted, so must the environmental benefits.

Does the world need to feel an increasing exposure to danger before it develops a collective sense of purpose? A cynic might suggest that we can afford to wait. But a responsible government must recognise the danger and respond to it. The British government has decided that the risks are too great to ignore, the potential harm too absolute. That is why our prime minister will attend the conference in Rio.



The future of our planet will be decided at Rio this summer

Can the voters be persuaded by the Chancellor's economics or rhetoric?

Norman Lamont's Budget will not win the election for the Tories, but it does clarify the choice facing voters. Because of the recession and the deterioration in public finances, the Tories will have to fight mainly on ground they would never have chosen but they are determined to retain some advantage on taxation.

Mr Lamont had almost no freedom of manoeuvre. But he played what limited cards he had with some skill, even if the total impact is unlikely to be enough either to inspire his own party or to excite the voters. It was a Budget to appease Thatcher's children, the skilled workers whose support the Tories won from 1979 onwards but who have been hard hit by the recession and are potential defectors at the election. The proposed reintroduction of a reduced rate band, of 20 per cent for the first £2,000 of taxable income, puts Labour on the spot.

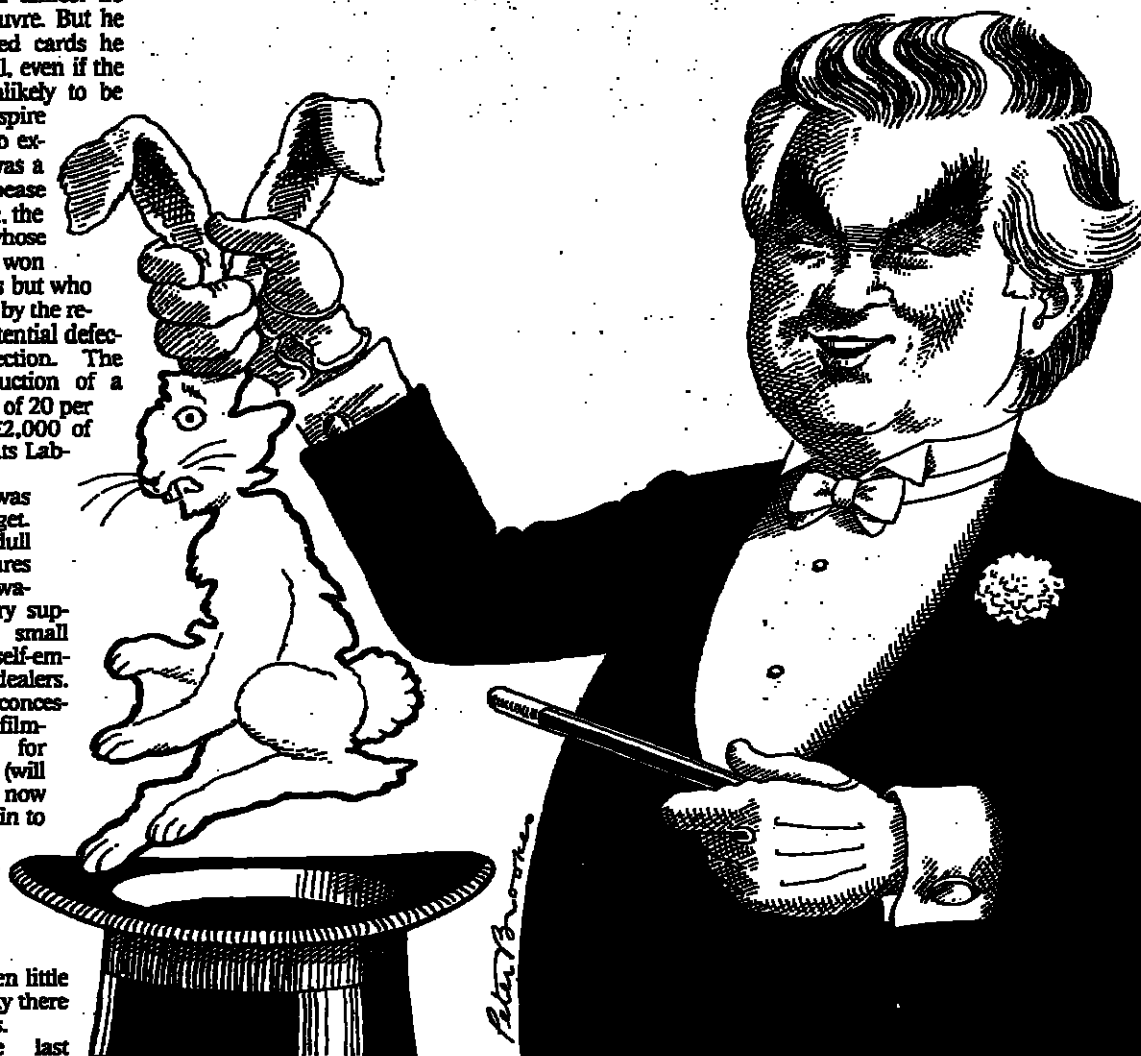
Otherwise, it was Rotary Club Budget. It was full of dull sounding measures designed to rally wavering natural Tory supporters such as small businesses, the self-employed and car dealers. There was even a concession from the film-going Chancellor for the film industry (will David Puttnam now change parties again to support the Tories?) There was a touch of virtue in the increase in tobacco tax in real terms. Overall, there may have been little to cheer, but equally there was little to depress.

Ministers were last night making much of Mr Lamont's prudence — the smaller than expected overall tax reductions of around £2.3 billion — but it is a heavily qualified prudence, born more of necessity than of inherent virtue. The tax cuts add to an already strong upward trend of borrowing. Mr Lamont did not have the flexibility to be accused of electioneering like Nigel Lawson five years ago, or like R.A. Butler in 1955.

The Treasury's Red Book makes plain just how limited Mr Lamont's options were. Public borrowing in the coming financial year will be £16 billion higher than forecast a year ago, at £28 billion, principally because of the delayed effects of the deeper than expected recession, and, to a lesser extent, because of discretionary increases in spending and cuts in taxation. And, as Mr Lamont did not point out, public borrowing is likely to be even higher next year, at £32 billion. Yesterday's disclosures incidentally make even more sensible the highly welcome, and surprise, suggestion from Mr Lamont that public spending and tax proposals should be produced simultaneously each year, in a unified budget in December, rather than several months apart, as now.

The government's aim of balancing the budget over the medium term looks even more than ever a pious aspiration. Even on the official assumption of a return to a growth in output of more than 3 per cent a year from 1994 onwards, and tight control of public spending, the government will still be a net

Will Lamont's magic work?



Peter Riddell assesses yesterday's Budget speech

borrower in 1996-7. These figures alone suggest that progress towards lower taxation is likely to be slow.

Neil Kinnock was making much last night of the sharp rise in borrowing as evidence of the long-term failure of the government's policies. But this also limits the scope for action for any incoming Labour govern-

ment. In a perverse way, Labour had been hoping for — as well as expecting — a larger overall tax cut, since reversing it in office would allow them to use the money to increase spending on public services such as health and education. That option is now narrower. While condemning borrowing for tax cuts, it will be hard for Labour to op-

pose cuts in income tax of which three-quarters will benefit those on below-average earnings.

The Tories will now make much of their claims to be the party of tax cuts (at least of direct taxes, if not of the overall tax burden). Although according to the polls, the public prefers increased spending on public services to tax cuts, the

Chancellor scores B-plus

Other judges of the dismal scale of the Budget speech, for technical merit, here are the marks for artistic impression, with explanatory glosses.

As a freestyle performance, Mr Lamont's Budget statement was solid rather than spectacular, scoring 5.5 on his home team order papers, and 3.5 on the Opposition ones. It did not spark with the flamboyance of Mr Lamont's predecessor, or glow with the urbanity of Roy Jenkins or R.A. Butler. But at least it started with a bold leap into the future, the announcement of the demise of this unique British institution. Tradition will surely insist that the new winter event is still named after the Old French *bougette*, the leather bag in which medieval chancellors carried their papers.

After that, the speech was a bit like Highland cattle from

Orkney: a point here, a point there, and a lot of shaggy bull in between. Mr Lamont tried for the memorable sound-bite that would transfuse the evening news bulletins. But "a Budget for the recovery" and "low tax and light government", though worthy objectives, are nips rather than bites.

Never at a loss for a few appropriated words, he quoted Benjamin Franklin to Monsieur Leroy on nothing in this world being certain except for death and taxes. But then he scored for putting a spin on it, by saying that he hoped that the latter, in his increased duty on cigarettes, would postpone the former. He scored marks for ironic triumph of hope over experience when he trusted that car dealers would pass on the reduction in car tax.

There was the rhetorical trick of *adulatio* or buttering up, when he referred to his

distinguished predecessors, who glowered, riddled behind him. There was a nice touch of meiosis or understatement, when the Chancellor recognised that the past year had been difficult for the car industry, and a snap of chauvinism when he promised not to let Brussels ride roughshod over the British cider industry. His delivery was calm, like that of a sully but well-behaved Pekingese. He occasionally made chopping gestures with trembling hands. The prime minister smiled boyishly. There was a cheer when he announced the new band of 20 per cent on the first £2,000 of taxable income. Not a historic Budget speech: they seldom are. But a workmanlike one. Best for artistic impression. We shall have to wait for a month to judge its political impression.

PHILIP HOWARD



...and moreover
ALAN COREN

Forgive me, but it's far too early to assess the electoral impact of the Budget. We do not yet know what Frank Bruno thinks about it. It is well on the cards that Frank will conclude that the Chancellor's measures are too little and too late, and were that indeed to be the case, then this, especially if combined with what many commentators believe will be Samantha Fox's view that the measures are too much and too early, could well spell disaster for the Tories.

As if that were not unsettling enough, authoritative sources close to Little and Large have let it be known that at least one of them is concerned that nothing has been done to lift sterling from the bottom of the ERM to confer more manoeuvrability on interest rates, while the other considers that Labour's refusal to commit itself unconditionally to a fourth Trident demonstrates an equivocation so specious as to disqualify it from taking office. Since, however, I do not know which of them holds which view, nor which of them the public loves more, I am unable to assess what effect this will have on the doings of April 9.

Oh God, what have we come to? Late on Tuesday night, my fax began to chatter, and when I ran upstairs I found its little slot coughing up a personal letter from one of our most illustrious actresses, soliciting my support for Neil Kinnock: would I be prepared to let my name be used in pre-electoral promotion, and

if so would I ring the Labour Party Celebrity Unit (sic) on 701 1234? After I had read it, I took the letter to my desk and carefully put it on top of the one I had received on Saturday from the world's greatest living novelist inviting me to attend the Tories' eve-of-poll rally and sit where the television cameras could get a good look at me. This meant that there were now two letters on top of the one from the nation's smartest comedian enjoining me to come out publicly on behalf of the Liberal Democrats.

What does all this tell us? It tells us that while none of these people has any idea how I vote, all of them are prepared to scrape the barrel in the attempt to woo even the most insignificant names to the horrible cause of beguiling votes not by policies but by personalities. They want me to declare that I vote for this, that, or the other, in the hope that my saying so will persuade someone else to. Someone else needs no proof of my entitlement to recommend this, that, or the other, it is enough for them that a small part of my head may be seen twice a week in *The Times*. People should therefore vote the way I do, just as they should vote Conservative because Cilla Black does, Labour because Prunella Scales does, or Libocrat because John Cleese does.

Now, that people should also drink Maxwell House because Michael Elphick does, wash up in Fairy Liquid because Nanette Newman does, and save with

the Leeds because George Cole does, is not of the slightest concern to me. It is possible that these luminaries do not actually drink, sluice and bank in the manner they purport, but if they do, it could equally well be that in their judgment their palates, hands and solvency are thereby the happier. It is a judgment they are qualified to make, and one, moreover, which the rest of us may test by running down to the High Street. True, fame is the spur; but that's all it is.

Shift to the electoral marketplace, however, and it becomes boot and saddle, too. Lacking political heroes, the parties borrow paragons on white chargers from elsewhere, irrespective of whether the adulation such stars can cozen is merely the result of being able to converse blind dates, do a passable impersonation of King Lear, or handle short rising balls outside the off-stump.

From the ridiculous to the even more ridiculous: some of you may wish to know to which of the three blandishments I have yielded. The answer is all of them. In each case, there are clear indications that my support will result in many a jolly evening in the company of famous faces, lots of booze, possibly even a hot dinner here and there. You will therefore, over the next few weeks, see my name in all manner of political propaganda. The important thing is not to believe a word I say.

Not that you need to be told that. This isn't your first election.

One more gem from Heath

WHILE Mrs Thatcher's supporters did nothing to hide their reservations about the Budget, Edward Heath at least left the Commons chamber with a noticeable grin on his face. He was, after all, the first senior Tory to call publicly for the date of the Budget to be switched.

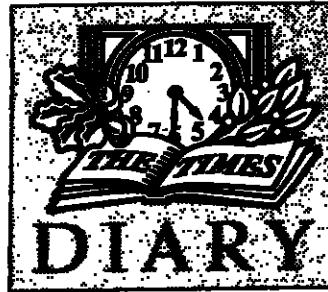
Last November Heath told a Commons committee set up to consider reforms of the Commons working hours that: "As far as financial matters are concerned I would like to see the financial year start with the calendar year. It can be perfectly well arranged. It would mean after the Queen's Speech we have the Budget, and then on January 1 the financial year begins... This would fit in of course with a large part of the business world's accounts."

Although Heath's views went widely unnoticed at the time, he did have a chance to tell John Major directly about his plans. Last week the prime minister invited him to his Commons office for a 30-minute chat and the Budget was set firmly at the top of the agenda. Mrs Thatcher, conspicuously, was not accorded the same privilege.

Yesterday's quiet victory will no doubt spur Heath on with his memoirs, which he has now taken up with a vengeance. Mrs Thatcher's deal last year to produce volumes of memoirs was said to have done wonders to concentrate his mind.

Vote early

THE COST of the now inevitable April election, launched by Norman Lamont's "prudent but popular" Budget, was calculated yesterday by local authority chiefs at a



very unprudent cost to the public purse of £25 to £30 million. That is the sum they say would have been saved if John Major had been prepared to wait until May 7 and synchronise the general election and local elections.

The last general election cost the taxpayer nearly £60 million and this time the figure is expected to rise substantially. An April poll would mean that the whole exercise will be replicated within a month for the local authority elections, doubling costs in many areas.

Tony Travers, local government lecturer at the London School of Economics, says: "Clearly it would be better and a much smaller drain on the public purse to hold two sets of elections on the same day. Whether it is better for democracy is another matter."

While the Chancellor promised jam tomorrow, today's recession was biting hard yesterday at Cheltenham. The racecourse caterers have ordered only 12,000 bottles of champagne for the National Hunt festival, down by a fifth on last year. For the 40,000-strong Irish contingent, 7,000 gallons of Guinness "I don't think it will be enough," said Jo McCarthy over from Cork, who yesterday afternoon admitted he was "losing steadily".

Your number's up

PERSONALISED car number-plates change money for huge sums in Britain, and a similar trade may be about to take off in Russia. All diplomats and foreign residents in Moscow are required to display yellow number-plates indicating the category of the owner. But, as with so much else in Moscow, there is now a shortage of the desirable D-plates and little prospect of fresh supplies. As a result, diplomats are being issued with the lower-category T-plates, while businessmen have to make do with N-plates.

To the average Westerner, the distinctions may seem academic. To Moscow's foreign community, though, the matter is of vital concern. The category of registration plate determines how big a bribe the traffic police will demand for an often spurious traffic infringement. A D-plate means you get off scot-free.



In a storm

AS the Chancellor posed in Downing Street with Gladstone's briefcase before his speech, the city was already celebrating: with two bottles of vintage port from 1863.

Taylor's Port and Couts Bank, which are both marking their 300th anniversaries this year, organised the vintage tasting session, in anticipation of the tax cuts. But they were parsimonious, to say the least, with the precious liquid.

The bottles were the only two known surviving examples of the 1863 vintage, with a saleroom value well in excess of £500 each. "We appealed far and wide for bottles, but I am afraid it had to be the humblest only," says Robertson.

The Queen left Norman Lamont in no doubt about what she expected from yesterday's Budget. Shortly before the Chancellor left to deliver her an advance copy of his speech on Monday night, the Treasury received a call from the Palace. Could the Chancellor ensure that all the Budget papers are held together with paper clips? The Queen, it seems, has an aversion to staples. Needless to say, Lamont duly obliged.

Distance between us

NEIL KINNOCK is unlikely to take much notice of Michael Howard's demand that he should tear up his Transport and General Workers' Union membership card. However, as the Communist Jack Adams took over as deputy general-secretary of the union this week, Kinnock distanced the party from the union. As predicted in the diary, earlier this year, Kinnock has rejected an offer from the union to use Transport House for its daily election press conferences. On the very day that Adams moved into his new office, Labour paid the deposit on a room hired for the duration at Millbank, still conveniently close for journalists to Conservative Central Office in Smith Square.



SINGLE ISSUE BUDGET

Yesterday's Budget expects to be judged not today but next month, and by the whole nation. This was billed as a Budget for an election, a last appeal for clemency as John Major rushes towards his probable day of battle on April 9. Norman Lamont entered the lists on a battered Treasury steed, but armour burnished and lance in hand. He made one brave charge, briefly unhorsed the Opposition and now retires to await the verdict of the electorate.

Economics were bound to be a sideshow in this Budget, but they cannot be ignored for that. The Treasury and Bank of England have spent the past two years sinking costly into Europe's monetary system, apparently willing the economy down whatever path the German central bank wished to take it. The past year has been an eerie time. Ministers have seemed dazed at the constantly mistaken predictions that have governed their speeches. Industry has seemed dazed as government failed to respond to their cries for help, while responding avidly to the cries of its own ministers for higher public spending. This bafflement has been the tenor of the year and it left Mr Lamont with an immensely difficult task yesterday afternoon.

On interest rates, Mr Lamont yesterday reaffirmed his commitment to Britain's new exchange rate orthodoxy. He promised that Britain would shift to the narrow band of the ERM at the current central rate, rather than use the move as a means of devaluing. Whether he really believes in this or whether he is merely agreeing with his stern advisers at the Bank of England is immaterial. That die appears cast. The sterling crises of fixed rates in the 1960s may or may not prove to have been less painful than those of the 1990s. All that is certain for the time being is that British Chancellors, and the British people, have lost real flexibility in a crucial area of economic policy. The Treasury in October 1990 threw away the weapon of interest rate adjustment that might have eased the government's electoral woes this past six months.

It is conceivable that history may regard these years as a brief aberration, a period when the "spirit of Maastricht" infused British politics and led its leaders in perverse directions from which they only recovered with great difficulty, both to the country and to their own electoral fortunes. The Treasury's insistence that interest rates be related not to the needs of British industry and commerce nor to currency markets worldwide but to those prevailing on the European continent could yet prove the albatross round the Tories' neck in the 1990s. It would be Margaret Thatcher's final revenge.

However, the government's sober behaviour on interest rates within the ERM has been compensated for by wild misbehaviour elsewhere. Public borrowing, that totem of Thatcherism, has been all but discarded as an economic control lever. Not just the recession but raw politics have forced public expenditure up, and now forced tax receipts down. Mr Lamont must say with Henry V, "Presume not that I am the thing I was." The result is a borrowing figure that has risen from zero in 1990-1 to £14 billion this year and a surprising £28 billion in 1992-3. Much has gone on salvaging ministers from mistakes and weaknesses, to poll tax payers, to the police, to assuage reform in health and education, and to public sector pay.

The Treasury is still committed to balancing the Budget "over the economic cycle". This would imply taxes higher by some £18 billion by the end of the decade, making the 20p tax rate almost inconceivable without a huge rise in other taxes such as VAT. There is nothing wrong in public borrowing and Mr Lamont might have made more of this had

the government not been so averse to it in the past. The cabinet has made him concede one spending increase after another in the past six months. Faced with that awesome £28 billion, he has rightly resisted any further pressure to bribe the electorate. If the electorate holds him responsible, he can reasonably pass the buck to the cabinet's big spenders. They too, are the sons of Thatcherism who used to scorn Ronald Reagan for America's soaring indebtedness in the 1980s.

The Treasury now expects to borrow £16 billion more in 1992 than it expected last April. The timing remains odd. If such a boost is right in fighting recession today, surely it was even more right 18 months ago, when every sector of the economy was already crying out for help. At very least Mr Lamont might have brought this Budget forward to last autumn, as he sensibly intends to do the next. The £2 billion might by now have had an impact both on the economy and on the Tories' electoral fortunes.

As it is, Mr Lamont had to confine his more general measures to those of most immediate effect. The desire of businesses for more relief was hard to grant in ways that might have yielded short-term effect. Corporation tax could not sensibly be cut further and various investment allowance proposals were longer term in their impact. Companies need help with cash flow, and Mr Lamont, unable to help with interest rates, did the best he could. The complicated relief to the uniform business rate will help all firms, including the smallest and least profitable, and do so immediately. This was sensible.

Nor did the Chancellor indulge in any reckless spending on the housing market. To have abolished mortgage interest tax relief would perhaps have been more than his colleagues could bear just now: though he might have nodded in that direction. What he did for the hard-pressed carmakers was rightly confined to boosting sales, rather than reducing the cost of car use. A similar sense of responsibility and caution infused the continued inactivation of excise duties and the ban against cigarettes and leaded petrol.

Given this relative lack of excitement, the Budget needed all the economic and electoral clout it could find elsewhere. It found it ingeniously in personal taxation. By not indexing top rates and by not cutting standard rate, Mr Lamont kept his fiscal credibility and cleverly avoided any reasonable accusation of election bribery. Instead he surprised his colleagues with the restoration of a bottom income tax rate of 20p. This usefully publicised the Tories' continued ambition to cut direct taxes, and did so at relatively little cost. It also trumped Labour's pledge to restore any "Tory election bribe". The benefit, while across the board, falls disproportionately on the low-paid. It must be all but impossible for Labour to cancel.

Given the straitjacket in which his own and his colleagues' past decisions had placed him, Mr Lamont showed remarkable dexterity. Tory party managers are having to rely on a "one message" campaign on the economy: that Labour is the high-tax party and they the low-tax one. At the end of a five-year parliament, the Tories promise a 20p standard rate, and Labour may find itself with a 30p one. The choice may be crudely materialist, but choice it is.

Mr Lamont was told to shout that message from the rooftops. That he has done. What he must fervently have hoped is that he and his Budget might be given a full eight weeks to echo into the factories, shops and offices of the nation. For some extraordinary reason, it appears that he is not to be granted that boon.

FOLDING PAPERS

Pravda means truth in Russian and Ivestia means news. The old joke in the days of communism was that there was no pravda in Ivestia and no Ivestia in Pravda. Nowadays, the danger is that neither of either will even exist, much longer. Freedom has a commercial price. Pravda can now say what it wants, untrammelled by the dictates of the communist party central committee. Without the party's cash, however, it cannot keep going. The newspaper that once vied with The People's Daily in China for the highest circulation in the world has been reduced to less than a tenth of its former readership, can manage only four pages and publishes only three days a week. Few want to read a paper whose name was once Orwellian newspaper for lies.

Other former Leninist organs are faring as badly. Newspapers such as *Trud* which purported to reflect the interests of trade unions but in fact simply reinforced the party message have seen their circulation down two thirds. The new republics are switching off central television, using the wavelengths for their own broadcasts. Without massive new subsidies, the former state television service will soon be bankrupt.

Some of the old papers, quietly retaining their communist-sounding names but nothing of the ideology, have managed to adapt to the market. *Ivestia* has a skilled advertising manager and is making a healthy profit. *Komsomolskaya Pravda* has become a radical crusader for the new democrats. A few new papers, especially those focusing on commerce and private business, are doing well. So too are a clutch of weeklies and monthlies, published in English and backed by foreign money, which are tapping the market for glossy advertisements, gossip and picture features so absent from the media for 70 years.

All newspapers in the former Soviet Union are suffering from an acute shortage of paper, distribution difficulties and an instinctive assumption, even among the new democratic leaders, that the press must be

subservient to the government. Tolerance of criticism is not yet understood in the fragile democracies of the Commonwealth of Independent States. In Georgia the wholesale attempt to suppress opposition views was the first sign that President Gamsakhurdia was as much an autocrat as the communists he overthrew. Newspapers and television have in turn not realised that they are no longer on the barricades, where objective reporting was less important than commitment. In a society so politicised, every editor feels he has a mission.

Russia was always a country where the written word exercised peculiar power. Five years of glasnost, spearheaded by the press, have given the media an importance that goes beyond merely reporting the daily turbulent events. Through the truth about Stalin, about social ills, the disastrous Soviet economy, the hypocrisy of communism, the people were in the end set free. Now Russia's intellectual horizons, along with its borders, are narrowing. Price rises, resentment at Russia's cultural imperialism and a distrust of anything emanating from Moscow have combined to limit and impoverish the press and rob television of its power to reach across the CIS's 11 time zones.

The likely disappearance of dozens of newspapers does not yet threaten the new democracy, however. The present ferment has thrown up as many underground and samizdat publications, some frankly pornographic, others racist, all experimental and probably transitory. The greater threat comes from the left and the right, who want to channel the press into old habits of obedience and loyalty.

But so far the peoples of the former Soviet Union have shown no sign of retreating from their new freedom to say and read what they want. The commitment to plurality and press freedom is as crucial as any constitutional guarantee of democracy. It has been said that a free press is preferable to free elections. As long as Russia retains the first, the second seems secure.

Heritage threat to E. Europe towns

From Professor John Dean

Sir, Lord Montagu, late of English Heritage, has recently called for a foundation funded by the European Community to protect the historic towns of eastern Europe. Other recent travellers have commented on the remarkable condition of these towns, especially their centres, in terms of conservation and environmental quality. Concern over their preservation is right but the problem is more complex than mere building conservation.

Within the Royal Town Planning Institute, our contacts with professional colleagues in eastern Europe show that they are well aware that the main threats to their towns come from the pressures of economic growth, leading to redevelopment, and from the impact of motor vehicle use. For more than 40 years these towns have depended almost entirely on public transport systems: the danger is that prosperity will lead to their abandonment in favour of the car, when in the rest of Europe we are seeking to reverse this trend.

There is just time for these countries to develop policies to meet these threats. If assistance is needed, it is critically necessary in the fields of urban planning and transport policy. Building conservation will be fighting a losing battle unless there is effective planning guiding urban development in ways which will minimise the destruction of this precious heritage.

There is a case for technical assistance which should be taken up vigorously by the EC: the United Kingdom, with its strong professional institutions, is well placed to contribute to such assistance. The renewal of basic infrastructure and the elimination of pollution have immediate priority, but if a start on planning is delayed until the completion of these priority tasks, it will probably be too late.

The historic towns of eastern Europe are an integral part of our European heritage. Planning policies are needed now to ensure their survival.

Yours faithfully,
 JOHN DEAN (Chairman,
 Conservation Panel,
 Royal Town Planning Institute,
 26 Portland Place, W1.

Doctors on trial

From Dr Harry Jacobs

Sir, Regional and local health authorities have an iniquitous system of trying doctors in disciplinary cases by means of closed courts, which are quite separate from General Medical Council hearings (letters, February 21, 27). The cost to taxpayers of nine or ten suspensions a year and the provision of substitutes, in addition to legal fees, may be as high as £4 million. The cost in family lives and reputations is far more than monetary.

Department of Health circular HC(909) of March 20, 1990, says: "The DPH (director of public health) will preserve the anonymity of those making the allegations. If they so wish, if [libel] proceedings are brought, the authority would meet the cost of their defence and of any damages or costs ordered to be paid in these proceedings."

Is this not departmental subversion, without proper standards of truth and proof?

Over the past six years my study group has examined 70 cases of suspensions. In at least 11 the action followed criticism by the doctor of the NHS. The NHS, as a near-monopoly employer, is increasingly suspending or dismissing its critics.

Few of these doctors have the money to bring libel actions against their accusers. If the legal system needs more openness, as your leading article of February 17 stated, then open and genuinely independent disciplinary tribunals for doctors are equally the only healthy answer.

Yours faithfully,
 HARRY JACOBS (Chairman,
 Study Group on Suspensions,
 Society of Clinical Psychiatrists,
 The Coach House, Rochford,
 Worrington, Colchester, Essex.

Weights and measures

From Mr John N. Pare

Sir, Mr Owen Curtis (letter, March 2) suggests "pounds and ounces" instead of "lb and oz". Alas, this would not help. For many years now all our children have been taught only metric weights and measures. When will the adults catch up?

Yours faithfully,
 JOHN N. PARE,
 Pen-y-lan Hall,
 Oswestry, Shropshire.

Dentistry in NHS

From Mr D. Andrew Lane

Sir, In the continuing debate on the future of the health service little has been written on the gradual disappearance of dentistry from that service. As someone who has witnessed at first hand the enormous strides dental health has taken in Britain I cannot believe that nobody cares; it seems simply that the warning signs that have been apparent for so long have remained largely ignored. In truth, the erosion of the service may now be so far advanced that nothing will save it.

Since 1980 patients' charges have risen from a maximum of £10 per course of treatment to £200 now. This will rise by a further 12.5 per cent to £225 from April 1 — three times the rate of inflation. In the same period the fee which a dentist

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

The dangerous realities of rabies

From the Director of the Animal Health Trust

Sir, Mr McKelvie's letter (March 7) points an accusatory finger at the veterinary profession and others for benefiting from Britain's strict rabies quarantine laws and for playing upon irrational fears of the disease.

The risk to man and animals from any disease must be seen in perspective and it is true that rabies can be controlled more effectively now than ever before. Nevertheless, only the rigid application of quarantine has kept the disease out of these islands and, apart from an outbreak in dogs following the first world war and incidents involving two dogs released from quarantine in 1969 and 1970, Britain has been free of rabies since 1902.

Affected dogs and cats with the so-called furious form of the disease can literally mangle, biting everything, animate and inanimate, that they come across and widely disseminating the virus. Clearly, such a disease is an occupational hazard for veterinary surgeons, many of whom are now routinely vaccinated against rabies.

The danger is compounded by the similarity of rabies in the early stages to other illnesses. For example, an affected cow may appear to be suffering from foot-and-mouth disease or lead poisoning, a dog or cat from a throat obstruction and a horse from colic.

As the risk of exposure increases, rabies must be included as part of the differential diagnosis, and practitioners will tend to view suspect animals as rabies-positive until that cause can be eliminated.

Mr McKelvie is correct in that veterinarians do have a vested interest in preventing rabies entering Britain, but as an ethical and humanitarian duty, not on the grounds of commercial expediency. The logistical and financial implications of endemic rabies are considerable and, notwithstanding the excellence of the state veterinary service in this country, a challenging task is ahead if the loss of the cordon sanitaire results in the loss of our proven anti-rabies defences.

Yours faithfully,
 ANDREW HIGGINS,
 Director, Animal Health Trust,
 PO Box 5, Newmarket, Suffolk,
 March 9.

From Mr A. A. Painter

Sir, Mr McKelvie's letter on rabies controls was sensible and timely. Some years ago I was involved in the enforcement of rabies controls in West Sussex. Co-ordination of the work of my department with the police, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Customs and Excise and other agencies was costly and, by virtue of the enormous volume of traffic to and from the county by sea and air, probably futile.

Our attempts to frighten the public into reporting the illegal landing of animals by notices and horror films were out of all proportion to the scale of the threat from rabies.

We went about our task with vigour and prosecuted every case of unlawful landing of animals. I recall a case where a diligent customs officer spotted a kitten concealed in the underclothing of an Italian woman. She was substantially fined

and the magistrates ordered the destruction of her kitten. Listening to her distraught cries as she left the court I wondered what I was doing.

There is no significant threat of rabies from any of the member states of the EC. The proposals for a Community-wide system of control by vaccination and passports are worthy of support.

Yours faithfully,
 A. A. PAINTER (Chief Trading
 Standards Officer, West Sussex
 County Council, 1968-79),
 2 Craigwell Lane,
 Bognor Regis, West Sussex.

From the Chairman, Quarantine Kennel Owners' Association UK

Sir, Concern over the possibility that our quarantine laws may be relaxed comes not just from the 50 or so quarantine kennel owners but also from the British Veterinary Association and the RSPCA and has cross-bench support in the House of Commons.

We have a special problem in this country because of the large urban fox population. Densities of up to 40 per square kilometre have been recorded in some residential areas, a figure far in excess of that which a rural area can support.

A wildlife vaccination programme needs to achieve an uptake of 90 per cent to be sure of containing an outbreak. In a baiting trial in Bristol about 18 months ago, using a density of 32 baits per square kilometre, only about 32 per cent of the fox population took the bait. Successive campaigns would be necessary to achieve the required percentage of immune animals; this will be much more difficult as the same dominant foxes (or cats) will repeatedly take the bait on offer. In our experience only about 50 per cent of dogs and cats in this country are kept up to date with their annual vaccinations and we can have little confidence that every member of the public travelling with their cat or dog would have the necessary two rabies vaccinations and the antibody test, involving three visits to the vet at an estimated cost of £80 to £100.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,
 GUY TAMPLIN, Chairman,
 Quarantine Kennel Owners' Association UK,
 Bee Cottage, Blaize Bailey,
 Newnham-on-Severn,
 Gloucestershire,
 March 9.

From Mr P. J. Moore

Sir, If the 30 cases of humans in Europe Mr McKelvie mentions had been clinically diagnosed as rabies they would almost certainly all have died. If, as I suspect, they had only been exposed to rabies, then rapid and adequate treatment would have given them a chance of survival.

I speak from experience as a former worker with the West African Council for Medical Research who received 30-odd injections after having contact with a rabid dog. No one who has seen a person die from rabies, as I did once in Nigeria, would say that the risk has been overplayed in Britain.

Yours truly,
 P. J. MOORE,
 The White House,
 Uppingham Road,
 Oakham, Rutland.

Australia and the RN

From Lady Mallinson

Sir, I am sad that the role of the Royal Navy in defending Australia and New Zealand from 1941 onwards seems to have been forgotten by the Australian prime minister and, indeed, by many others (letters, March 3, 5).

As soon as we had coped with bombed cities, the threat of invasion, the Battle of the Atlantic, Arctic convoys, and the Mediterranean convoys for the relief of the siege of Malta (the key to communications with the Far East), an Eastern Fleet was built up for Pacific operations. This fleet included battleships of the King George V class, destroyer

flotillas and aircraft carriers of the Illustrious class with decks specially armoured to withstand kamikaze air attacks.

A close relation of mine served in one of the Q-class destroyers which hunted submarines in the Indian Ocean, the Java Sea and the Pacific. HMS Quadrant was renowned for going into action playing a popular tune of the time on an old gramophone — the "Java Jive".

Their popularity and the generous hospitality they received when they visited Sydney, Melbourne and Auckland was overwhelming.

Yours faithfully,
 MARGARET MALLINSON,
 25 Wimpole Street, W1,
 March 5.

Tale of two teapots

From Mr Sam Twining

Sir, Your picture caption, "Tea for one" (March 5) refers to the opening of Britain's first tea and coffee museum. May I point out that my company has exhibited tea and coffee memorabilia at our premises in London's Strand (the site of foundation of our business in 1706) since 1986.

Your caption-writer took the precaution of placing the word

"reputedly" in front of "the world's latest teapot". We would claim that distinction for our own teapot made for the Great Exhibition of 1851. When not travelling the world to promote British tea, our pot is usually on display in our London museum. It is believed to hold 13½ gallons.

Yours faithfully,
 SAM TWINING (Director),
 R. Twining and Co. Ltd.,
 216 The Strand, WC2,
 March 6.

work: some 25 million patients have been registered, and now we are to be penalised for our success. In the last financial year for which I have complete figures my practice made a profit of 14 per cent and that was only achieved by not buying many items of equipment which were desperately needed. A 13.8 per cent cut would leave me with nothing.

I have no choice. I can no longer carry on providing NHS dentistry. I have sent my resignation letter to Oldham family health service authority, and I shall be writing to every patient informing them of my reasons for this deeply regretted decision.

Yours faithfully,
 D. ANDREW LANE (Secretary,
 British Society for Occlusal Studies),
 PO Box 56,
 Oldham, Lancashire,
 March 4.

Vision of a new sailing ship

From Commodore Morin Scott

Sir, As one who has competed frequently in the International Tall Ships Races over the past 25 years, it has always been an embarrassment to me (and other British crews) that this essentially maritime nation of ours has never been able to enter a sizeable, and thus prestigious, square rigger.

The former USSR possesses eight (although their individual exact ownership is now a matter of question), the Norwegians have three, the Japanese two and most other countries with any maritime aspirations have one. Apart from their direct use as naval and youth training ships they become large, very visible, travelling ambassadors. Would it not be a magnificent tribute to Her Majesty, 40 years after her accession, to commission such a vessel and fit her out for use throughout the year as a sail training ship for our Royal Navy? Arrangements could also be made to embark young Merchant Navy officers and other young people, such as those endeavouring to gain awards under the Duke of Edinburgh's scheme.

Yours etc.,
 MORIN SCOTT
 (Commodore, Square Rigger Club),
 Sudley Lodge, Sudley Gardens,
 Bognor Regis, West Sussex,
 March 9.

Routemaster revival

From Dr Myer Goldman

Sir, There are, of course, other problems with one-man buses in addition to the congestion they cause (letter, March 3). The lack of a conductor does nothing to inhibit vandalism and unruly behaviour; and the need to drive on our crowded roads as well as take the fares is a source of great stress to many drivers.

With high unemployment, would it not be sensible to bring back conductors on all buses? Apart from providing for increased safety, their wages would probably be recouped in reduced running expenses.

Yours faithfully,
 MYER GOLDMAN,
 36 Druce Cross Gardens,
 Liverpool 18.

From Mr Montague Calman

Sir, May I add an even more dangerous aspect of these grotesque monsters? In peak hours the driver/operator cannot adequately supervise the numbers of passengers getting onto his vehicle. As a consequence I have on numerous occasions seen an overloaded bus, with people even standing upstairs and on the stairs.

One shudders to think what would happen were the bus involved in an accident.

Yours truly,
 MONTAGUE CALMAN,
 1E Carlisle Place, SW1.

Rented property

From Councillor Margaret Moran

Sir, While I agree rented property will remain "scarce and expensive" ("Renting: too little, too dear", Life & Times, February 26), despite government schemes to rejuvenate it, I do not agree that this is caused by "the British penchant for home ownership". The British are forced to buy because the expense and insecurity of renting does not make it a viable option.

Since the 1988 Housing Act was introduced to increase the private rented sector, rents in London have soared by over 50 per cent for some sizes of property, forcing more and more tenants into the housing benefit poverty trap.

Picking up the bill for expensive rents is expected to cost the public purse £2.115 million this year, rising to £2.800 million in 1993-4. Surely it would be more sensible to develop a cheaper private rented sector.

That way the dependency of low-income groups would be broken, while people ineligible for benefits would not be forced to mortgage themselves up to the hilt and become vulnerable to the threat of repossession.

None of the government schemes to increase the private rented sector will produce cheaper rents or security, so rented property, as you quite rightly conclude, will stay "scarce and expensive".

Yours faithfully,
 MARGARET MORAN
 (Chairman),
 London Housing Unit,
 2nd Floor, Bedford House,
 125 Camden High Street, NW1.

Bridge of sighs

From Mrs Nadine Pepps

Sir, I am curious to know why the bridge over the M4 near Bristol had become so dangerous that it had to be demolished when it was only built during the last two decades.

My ancestor, Thomas, first Baron Camoys, who died in 1422, built the bridge over the river Rother at Trotton in Sussex. It still conveys all the traffic on the A272 main road between Midhurst and Petersfield. As far as I know it has not wobbled once.

Sincerely,
 NADINE PEPPS,
 30/31 Lyffield Court,
 Kidmore End Road,
 Emmer Green, Reading, Berkshire,
 March 3.

OBITUARIES

DWIGHT BOLINGER

Dwight Lemerton Bolinger, teacher of linguistics, died on February 23 aged 84. He was born on August 18, 1907, in Topeka, Kansas.

DWIGHT Bolinger was one of the most influential and respected figures in the fields of linguistics and of Spanish language studies. His interest in the expressive power of language had a practical application. Always noted for his humanitarian views and for his vigorously-expressed opposition to the policies of the American government, he produced in *Language: the Loaded Weapon* (1980) a revealing and thoroughly-documented study of how language can be, and is, used at all levels of power for deliberate obfuscation.

The most characteristic, and perhaps the most fundamentally important, aspect of his contribution to language study was his conviction that its goal is not, or should not be, the impossible one of forcing the complexity of human language into a single descriptive system, but that of appreciating the infinite range of its communicative resources and the delicacy with which they are employed by ordinary speakers.

Bolinger graduated with a BA from Washburn University, and then took an MA from Kansas University and a PhD from Wisconsin University, where he took up his first teaching post as Spanish instructor in 1936. From then until his retirement in 1973 he held posts at various American universities, the last being professor of romance languages and linguistics at Harvard. He was elected president of the Linguistic Society of America in 1972 and president of the newly-founded Linguistic Association of Canada and the United States in 1975. He was a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a corresponding member of the Royal Spanish Academy, and (in 1990) a corresponding fellow of the British Academy.

His publications number well over 300 books and articles, including *Aspects of Language* (1968, revised 1977), *Degree Words* (1972), *Meaning and Form* (1975), and *Intonation and its Parts* (1986). His last published work was *Essays on Spanish: Words and Grammar* (1991), a collection of previously-published articles, each with a new introduction. Bolinger's interest in language, ultimately to be the

field in which his most important work was accomplished, was lifelong. It showed itself in his student years in his fascination with collecting synonyms. His method of teaching Spanish to first year students led to a professional concern with grammatical structures; to illuminate the idiosyncrasies of Spanish grammar, he sought for parallel usages in English, thus demonstrating connections which had not previously been observed.

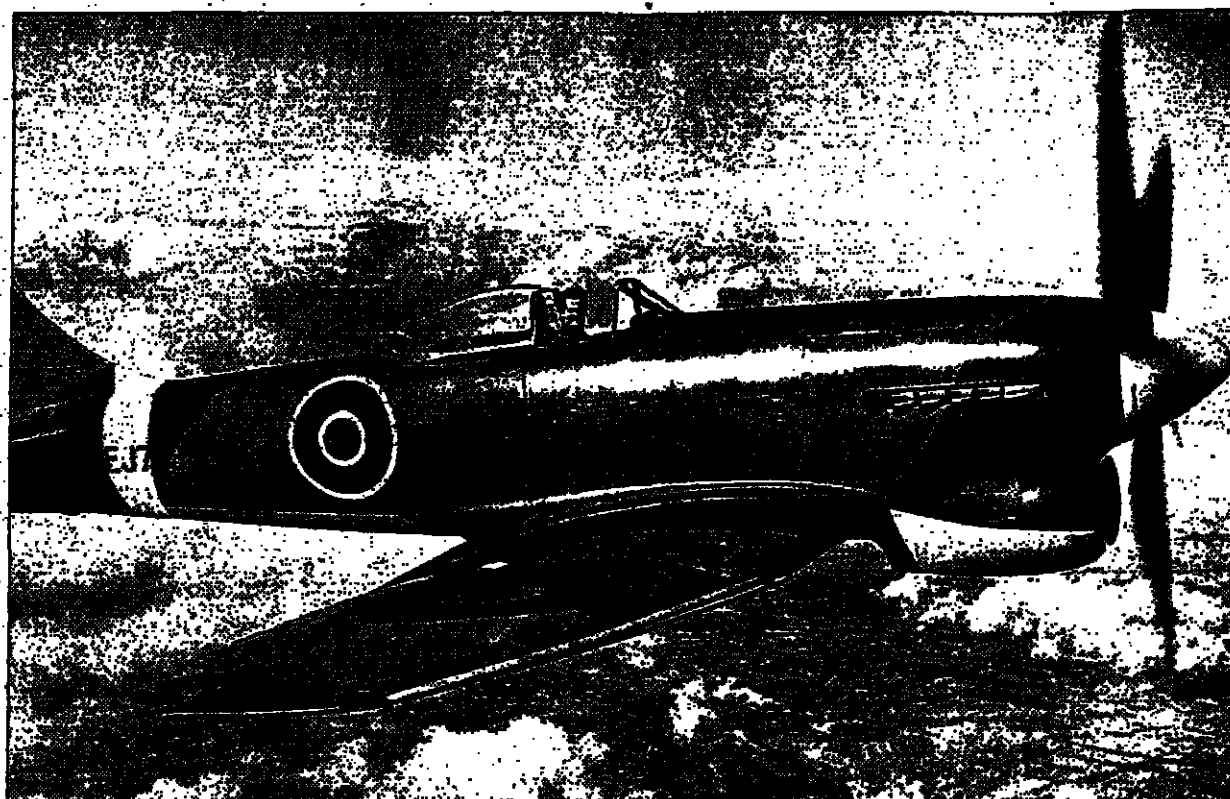
Another early interest, music, was applied to his linguistic investigations to produce his extensive and invaluable work on the intonational patterns of English and Spanish; an important scholarly achievement was to demonstrate, in an era when American linguists seemed bent on reducing all language description to the permutations of a limited number of units, that the complexities and subtleties of intonation simply could not be adequately described in terms of a system of "pitch phonemes".

Bolinger's linguistic writings were invariably characterised not only by his easy, lucid and often witty style, but by a brilliant capacity for observing and analysing subtle differences of meaning in deceptively similar expressions. At a time when linguistics was dominated by the highly abstract Chomskian school ("theorising in the stratosphere") as Bolinger once called it, his work was firmly grounded in actual usage. He invariably carried a notepad on which he jotted down any fragment of conversation which might serve to illustrate a grammatical or stylistic argument, and an attractive feature of his writings was his use of patently real-life examples.

In a long and active career, coinciding with the most argumentative years in the history of linguistics, Bolinger made and realised contact with a world-wide company of scholars and researchers in the field. Not the least noteworthy aspect of his academic life, and a sign of the personal quality of the man, is that in a field in which impassioned controversy was endemic, his relations with colleagues, differences of opinion notwithstanding, were unfailingly friendly.

Bolinger's wife Louise, née Schrynmaker, whom he married in 1934, predeceased him in 1986. He is survived by a son and a daughter

BILL HUMBLE



Bill Humble at the controls of a Hawker Tempest fighter — scourge of the V-1 flying bomb

William "Bill" Humble, MBE, test pilot, died on March 1 aged 80. He was born on April 14, 1911.

BILL Humble seemed destined for the family coal mining business in Yorkshire after his education at Repton and Cambridge, where he qualified as a mining engineer. However, his heart was in the skies. After learning to fly in 1929 he became a member of 504 and 609 Squadrons of the Auxiliary Air Force. In the golden years of pre-war aviation he owned a number of aircraft and was recognised as an exceptionally talented pilot, achieving considerable success in the air racing events of that time.

After the outbreak of war he was invited to join the test pilot team of Hawker Aircraft under the leadership of the chief test pilot P. M. S. (George) Bulman and his deputy, Philip Lucas. Initially Bill Humble tested Hurricanes, which were being produced at a rate of seven a day during 1940-41. His ability as a pilot and potential aptitude for test flying were soon recognised and he became involved in development work on the Hawker Typhoon, which became the RAF's successful "tank-buster" in Normandy. This led to him becoming experimental test pilot for the prototypes of the Tempest, later so effective against the V-1, Fury and Sea Fury.

It was during development of the Fury, with the then troublesome Centaurus engine, that he saved the prototype on a number of occasions following mechanical failure. It was also the period in fighter development when the hitherto uncharted effects of compressibility first arose during high speed dives —

later becoming known as the sound barrier — giving rise to hazardous handling problems. During his period of flight testing at Hawker six of his colleagues were killed. At the end of the war Bill Humble became Hawker's chief test pilot and made the first flight with the jet-powered P1040 from Boscombe Down on September 2, 1947. He continued development work on this and the N746 prototype of the successful Seahawk naval fighter until his retirement from test flying in 1948.

Bill Humble will also be remembered as being one of the finest exponents of display flying of his time, as he proved at the post-war Society of British Aircraft Constructors' air shows at Radlett and Farnborough in the Sea Fury. Demonstration flying of this calibre contributed greatly to the export success of the

Hawker products. For his services to British aviation he was appointed MBE in 1949. After his retirement from test flying Bill Humble remained with the Hawker Siddeley group as a sales executive, with the Middle East as his principal territory. He enjoyed travel and acting as an aviation ambassador as he moved around between Cairo, Beirut and Cyprus. In his business career he retained the laconic manner and surface relaxation that had characterised his test pilot days. Then, when things went wrong, all was passed off as a "dilly do". On one occasion when Humble was stranded in Athens with a troublesome Sea Fury on a delivery flight he sent a brief telegram — "Send funds, starving".

He is survived by his second wife Georgina, and a son and daughter.

APPRECIATIONS

Art Babbitt



AS WELL as being a great animator, Art Babbitt (obituary March 9) was a great teacher and made a major impact on British animators. The most exciting month of my professional life was when Art first gave a four-week seminar at my Soho studio in 1974, when he revealed the Hollywood secrets of animation with outstanding clarity and precision. This was like water in the desert for us. I wrote down almost every word he said and these notes have ended up as a kind of unpublished instruction book, used world-wide. He had, in his words, "the low blood pressure of a teacher", and his patience was extraordinary, balanced with a crusty "don't think you know it all, kid."

He left Hanna Barbera in 1975, and spent his last years working on my forthcoming feature, *The Thief and The Cobbler* developing the character of King Nod, and doing preliminary animation on the cobbler as well as teaching our staff.

Babbitt had an unusual lucidity, a surgeon's mind. Most animators aren't known for their coherence — they have trouble talking about what they're doing. This is because it is not a language of tongue. But Babbitt had no difficulty in explaining how to construct an action, a walk, where the weight is, or how to accent a

gesture. And he had the whole arranged in a logical teaching order and system.

He really collated the alphabet of the study of movement. He was particularly brilliant at animating dancing. In the *Dance of the Chinese Mushrooms* in *Fantasia*, his sense of timing and understanding of rhythm created a little masterpiece in less than a minute of screen time.

His effect on many young animators world-wide was enormous. He cared deeply about teaching, and was writing an epic instruction book on animation, but I could never get him to finish it to get it published. Somewhere along the line, Art decided it was to be a university course, not just a book. He wished to leave a legacy to animators. He has.

Richard Williams

Florence Tim-oi Li



THE obituary of Florence Tim-oi Li (March 3) who in 1944 was the first woman to be ordained priest in the Anglican Church, brought to mind a decision made as early as 1922 by the board of directors of the London Missionary Society "to approve the ordination of women on the same conditions as in the case of men". As recorded in *The Chronicle* of that year, the directors approved "the principle that sex should not be a disqualification for the ordination of women for service in the mission field, the soil which nurtured Florence Tim-oi Li."

In the face of the many challenges taken up by the Christian church in the mission field — evangelical, educational, and medical — women's capabilities were

given much expression and due recognition. The pressing need for common sense and cooperation in such work was conveyed to me by my parents — Bishop Horace G. Watts and Ruth Jenkins Watts — both Anglican missionaries in China in the 1920s.

Mrs Margaret E. Webb

Oscar Broneer

YOUR account of some of Oscar Broneer's archaeological achievements (obituary March 4) lacked the space to do equal justice to his personal qualities. Others are more qualified than I to write of these, since I did not meet him until he was approaching his 90th year. Then, despite great physical disability, he led me up hot, steep hillsides to relocate sections of

the Mycenaean Wall he had discovered earlier on the Corinthian Isthmus.

His erudition (he once learnt five languages concurrently) was modest and generously shared; and his simple, warm manner was complemented by a fine physique and presence. To listen to him recount his parents' life in the backwoods of mid-19th century Sweden, was to be transported to a vanished Europe.

Dr Donald Field

DAVID BELL



David Bell, MBE, who was able to use his own experience of severe wartime injuries to benefit the disabled, died on March 2 aged 71. He was born in Edinburgh on February 6, 1921.

DAVID Bell practised courage and persistence in the face of misfortune which left him doubly disabled — both blind and handicapped. His father was "an old contempler" and had been taken prisoner in the Battle of the Somme. David Bell was educated at Leith Academy and before the war was an apprentice draughtsman although he was a St Andrew's ambulance volunteer and after the war intended to study medicine. After Munich, he tried to join 603 Squadron RAAF but being in a reserve profession was rejected. He then wangled his way into the Royal Engineers and was in the First Field Squadron Royal Engineers from Tobruk to Benghazi. At the Battle of Knightsbridge he was clearing mines in outer defences to let guards and tanks out when a mine blew up in his face. He lost his sight, part of one arm from above the elbow, the other from above the wrist and was unconscious for two months.

Evacuated to South Africa he recovered and surgeons rebuilt his limbs to give him a residual grip in his left arm. But he had no sense of touch. General Smuts who visited the hospital was so impressed by David Bell's spirit that he presented him with his own Victory Pin.

Bell returned to England in 1943, to the St Dunstan's rehabilitation centre where he was taught how to type and took up the trombone. He intended to study languages and become an interpreter but his marriage to Miss Sibyl Page, who was a volunteer with St Dunstan's, changed that plan and he

decided to go into business. He returned to Edinburgh in 1946 to start a small shop. In this he was aided by St Dunstan's and King Farouk of Egypt. King Farouk had read Bell's story in a British newspaper and sent a gift of 25,000 monogrammed Egyptian cigarettes to help start the business. Bell was able to run the small tobacco and confectionery shop with the aid of special equipment from St Dunstan's allowing him to take money and give change — he manipulated this with startling speed and precision.

The business prospered and expanded but he decided to resume his education by going to Edinburgh University. Being handicapped he was unable to use braille but was helped by many student friends who read to him and composed lecture notes with him. He graduated with an MA in 1952 and a BComm in 1955. He continued to take an interest in the university as president of the undergraduates' association and the commerce graduates' association (1965-67) and he sat on the business committee of Edinburgh University's council from 1980-1983. He continued to work on behalf of the disabled during this time and was nominated to local and regional hospital boards. He was vice-president of the National Federation of the Blind and on the Scottish appeals board of the BBC. In December 1957 he was the subject of Eamonn Andrews's *This Is Your Life*.

He continued to campaign and work for the disabled and was active in the Round Table, setting up the Ex-Tablers Club (41 Club) in Edinburgh. His linguistic skills were much in evidence in international fund-raising and campaigning. He was the 41 Club's president from 1969-70 and lectured in French and German to ex-servicemen's organisations and business groups. He campaigned actively for European recognition and in 1972 was appointed MBE for his work for the disabled.

In the 1970s he continued to campaign but suffered increasingly poor health and for this reason moved in the mid-1980s to Haywards Heath to be near the St Dunstan's Blind Ex-Servicemen's Association. He was gregarious but was also a man who could not stand to hear his "nothings" mentioned. A bon vivant, he was an inspiration to many, as well as a disabled person. He leaves a wife and two children.

Appointments

Latest appointments include: The following to be members of the Privy Council: Mr Donald McKinnon, Deputy Prime Minister, New Zealand; Mr William Birch, Minister of Labour, New Zealand; Mr Justice Gault and Mr Justice McKay, both judges of the New Zealand Court of Appeal. Mr John Soutford to be a Public Works Loan Commissioner. Dr Bridget Ogilvie to be a Trustee of the Science Museum. Baroness Blackstone to be a Trustee of the British Museum.

Legal: Mr Peter Gilmore Noto Badge to be Chief Metropolitan Stipendiary Magistrate, from July 30, in succession to Sir David Hopkin, who is retiring. Mr Robin Holmes, Administrator, Midland and Oxford Circuit, to be Head of Appointments Group, Lord Chancellor's Department, in succession to Mr John Heritage.

Mr Laurence Oates, Head of the Lord Chancellor's Department's Legal and Law Reform Group, to be Administrator of the Midland and Oxford Circuit. Mr Richard White, Head of the Lord Chancellor's Department's International Division, to be Head of the Legal and Law Reform Group.

Horticulture

Edinburgh takes a gold medal

By ALAN TOOGOOD, HORTICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

THE Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, has won a gold medal for its unique exhibit of tender rhododendrons at the Royal Horticultural Society's early spring show which opened at Westminster yesterday.

This is the first time many of these plants have been shown outside Edinburgh and they form an impressive centrepiece in the show, being staged in a natural looking setting, with epiphytic or tree-dwelling, species mounted on mossy tree trunks.

Known as Vireya or Malesian rhododendrons, they have been collected for the Royal Botanic Garden by its resident scientist, Dr George Argent, from Malaysia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and the Philippines. These rhododendrons are rarely grown, but they make good cool greenhouse or conservatory plants.

Some distinctive species in the display include the epiphytic *Rhododendron himantodes* with dusky white rounded flowers and narrow waxy foliage; the ground-growing *R. gracilentum* with red tubular

flowers; and the fragrant *R. lasianthum* with long tubular white flowers.

Gold medals have also been awarded to Burncoose and South Down Nurseries, of Redruth, Cornwall (trees, shrubs and ornamental plants); Butterfield's Nursery, of Bourne End, Buckinghamshire (for a display of glaucous *Podocarpus* and *Marattia*, of New Guinea, for a display of alpine and dwarf bulbs; and Southfield Nurseries, of Grimsby, South Humberside (for a display of cacti and succulents).

The beautifully staged display of alpine and dwarf bulbs from Potton and Martin includes cypripediums, with spotted flowers and grey ferny foliage, which are in vogue; a collection of scutellaries; and *Primula allionii* cultivars for the alpine house.

Butterfield's Nursery is a regular exhibitor at this show and has staged a large collection of glaucous, dwarf almost hardy orchids for the alpine house, in all shades of pink, and with strong emphasis on the newer yellow-

flowered hybrids. A particularly good yellow is *Platone Sharning* 'Ducet' with crimson throat.

Shrubs, trees and other ornamental plants with attractive spring flowers or foliage are being shown by Burncoose and South Down Nurseries, of Redruth. The large flowered woodland garden magnolias with pink-flushed flowers are especially eye-catching and include the *Magnolia campbellii* cultivars 'Charles Raffin' and 'Lanarth'. With cyclamen-purple flowers is *Magnolia 'Czechy' Belle*.

Very well supported is the RHS early daffodil competition. Winner of the prestigious class for six cultivars is Mr Dan du Plessis, of Landplui, Cornwall. His exhibit includes two that he has introduced into the trade from Northern Ireland: white large-cupped cultivars 'Chenoweth' and 'Colford', both raised by daffodil grower Brian Duncan.

The show, sponsored by Wigan Investment Company, is in the New International Hall, Greycoat Street, Westminster, and is open today from 10am to 5pm.

Latest wills

Lady Rhyll, of Swanton, Hampshire, widow of Lord Rhyll, the Conservative politician, left estate valued at £3,616,901 net. She left her estate to relatives.

Sir John Stone, of Cambridge, economist, left estate valued at £390,073 net.

Dr Julius Grant, of London SW7, forensic scientist, left estate valued at £2,380,320 net.

Mr Ernest William Skinner, of St Mirer, Wadebridge, Cornwall, left estate valued at £1,160,885 net.

Other estates include (net, before tax paid): Miss Caroline Ruby French, of Shaldon, Devon, £927,403.

Mr Patrick Hickey, of Woking, Surrey, £541,907.

Mrs Caryl Leighton Houston, of Wimbledon, London, £683,839.

Mr Arthur William Jordan, of Imberrow, Hereford and Worcester, £575,920.

Mr Arthur Morgan, of Newton Abbot, Devon, £263,808.

Mr Philip John Stratton Oldershaw, of Walsingham, Lincolnshire, £563,154.

Mr Eric Brannwell Taylor, of Tintinhull, Somerset, £383,835.

North Mary Taylor, of Lewisham, London, £704,966.

Mrs Minnie Brownlow, of Blackburn, Lancs, £527,890.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Torquato Tasso, poet, Sorrento, 1544; William Huskisson, statesman, Birch Mireton, Hereford and Worcester, 1770; Sir Henry Tate, sugar manufacturer, founder of the Tate Gallery, Chodley, Lancashire, 1819; Marius Petipa, choreographer, Marseilles, 1819; Sir Malcolm Campbell, holder of speed records on land and water, Chislehurst, Kent, 1885; Henry Cowell, composer, Menlo Park, California, 1897.

DEATHS: Hannah Cowley, dramatist and poet, Tiverton, 1809; Sir Alexander Mackenzie, explorer in North America, discoverer of penicillin, Nobel laureate 1945, London, 1955; Richard Byrd, aviator and polar explorer, Boston, Massachusetts, 1957; Earl Stanley Gardner, crime writer, Temecula, California, 1970.

Luddite riots began, 1811. Bradford reservoir, Sheffield, burst its banks and over 250 people were drowned, 1864.

March 11 ON THIS DAY 1905

The Russo-Japanese war began with Japan's surprise attack on Port Arthur. Russia's defeat at Mukden, the capital of Manchuria, and the destruction of its fleet completed its humiliation and the war ended in September.

CAPTURE OF MUKDEN

TOKIO — The following official telegram, dated to-day, was received in Tokyo this afternoon: "To-day at 10am we occupied Mukden."

"Our enveloping movement, which has been proceeding since several days, has completely attained its object."

"Fierce engagements are now in progress at various places near Mukden. We have taken an exceedingly large number of prisoners, and quantities of arms, ammunition, provisions, food, and war material, but it has been impossible yet to count them."

KUROPATKIN SURROUNDED

ST PETERSBURG — There is no longer scope for optimism. The grave fears are entertained for the safety of the army. The Russians have been compelled to leave Mukden, which has already been occupied by the Japanese. Kurapatkin is delivering a last desperate blow against the enemy, who are surrounding him on every side.

Such is the picture of the situation given by the latest Russian despatches. These, as well as Tokyo reports of the surrounding of 200,000 men, were stopped by the censorship. Consequently the general public is still unaware of the gravity of the situation, and continues to enjoy itself after the customary fashion of a carnival week.

It was late this evening when the official news of the surround-

der of Mukden appeared. The last unofficial messages transmitted by the Mukden telegraph office yesterday evening said that a decisive battle was proceeding north of the city. Our forces were constantly increasing. The men had lost hope of victory and were going out to fight with the conviction that they were being sacrificed to save the rest of the army.

Telegraphic and railway communication with Mukden was finally severed late on Thursday. This is here regarded as a sign that the Japanese are gradually hemming in Kurapatkin and gaining a permanent foothold on the railway.

According to an account of the final operations furnished by an officer of the General Staff, General Kaulbars, reinforced by several corps belonging to General Linewitch and General Biderling, has been withdrawing General Okla's outposts. General Kurapatkin has been personally directing the battle. General Demobovsk's corps was engaged the whole of Wednesday night north of Fuling, and sustained terrible losses.

The 17th Corps, which was sent in support, succeeded in repulsing the enemy. This, it was hoped, would enable Kurapatkin to extricate the army under cover of a terrific sandstorm which prevailed on Thursday, but General Okla resumed the battle a few hours later, and Kurapatkin was again compelled to send his best troops to engage the foe.

The fiercest fighting was at San-tai-ze, six miles northeast, and at Wan-chen-tun, seven north of Mukden. The proximity of the latter point to the railway enabled the Japanese to destroy the track and shell the Mandarin Road.

An official report puts the Russian losses up to Thursday morning at 65,000. Officers of the General Staff refuse to consider Kurapatkin's position hopeless.

Smoking
Joe fight
to avoid
ash can

THE TIMES BUSINESS

WEDNESDAY MARCH 11 1992

BUSINESS EDITOR JOHN BELL

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Gilts hit by £28bn borrowing forecast

Budget damps hopes of cut in interest rates

BY MICHAEL CLARK AND NEIL BENNETT

HOPES that the Budget would be swiftly followed by a cut in interest rates to stimulate the economy began to fade as soon as Mr Lamont sat down, with leading brokers forecasting an early mark-down in share prices and government bonds when trading resumes.

Gilt-edged stocks plunged more than 5% in response to the Chancellor's forecast of a £28 billion public sector borrowing requirement for 1992-3. The figure was higher than had been expected by overseas investors, who began to worry about the scale of gilt issues that will be needed to fund the shortfall.

The long gilt June future started the day at £96.66 and had fallen to £96.50 by the time the Chancellor stood up at 3.30pm. Soon after the PSBR announcement it fell to £96 and was still sliding in late trading.

Don Smith, a gilt analyst at Greenwell Montagu, said the PSBR figure had dominated market sentiment. "The market was looking for an explanation for the size of the PSBR and did not find any. The Treasury is being unusually realistic about its forecasts." He added that the market was waiting to gauge

public opinion before making any decisive move.

Mark Cliffe, chief economist at the Nomura Research Institute, said the Budget would have a negative impact on the market all-round.

"There should be grave doubts about the projected decline in the PSBR over the next five years and the market will clearly be nervous about the political impact of the Budget. The net tax cuts were much smaller than anticipated."

The Bank of England said it plans to raise the funds for next year's PSBR through gilt issues, complemented by an increased contribution from National Savings, through the Guaranteed Growth Bond, its new product.

Analysts forecast that the Bank will need to raise up to £33 billion in gilts. The Bank said that half the target would be raised through gilt auctions every two months in 1992-3, similar to its operations in the current year.

Each of these auctions will offer between £2 billion and £3 billion of gilts and cover a range of maturity dates. The auctions will allow non-competitive bids of up to £500,000 to encourage small investors.

The auctions will be combined with continuing sales of

tap stock in the secondary market, which will be used to take advantage of the market when it is strong. If these methods fail to raise the necessary sums, the Bank will also offer stock by tender at a minimum price. The Bank said it hoped these issues would be infrequent because of the regular auctions.

The foreign exchange markets failed to provide any comfort to the gilt market or the government. Sterling slid lower during the Budget speech as the Chancellor boasted to deliver a substantial boost to the economy or Conservative popularity. At 3pm the pound stood at \$1.7237 against the dollar. By the official close an hour later, while the Chancellor was still on his feet, it had fallen to \$1.7187 and failed to recover.

Against the mark it fell by a quarter of a pence in the same hour, to close at DM2.8697. The trade-weighted index started and closed at 90.2, having touched 90.2 at midday.

Paul Chertkow, chief currency strategist at Citicorp, said: "This was not a Budget to buy pounds. It was neutral for the market and less than bold."

"There is virtually no chance for lower interest rates before the election now. When we reflect we will realise that the recession has had a greater impact on government funding than anyone imagined and has limited any giveaway."

Dealers in the equity market described the Chancellor's proposals as politically astute but were worried that they were not enough to stimulate the economy. Many felt that by doubling the PSBR he may have squandered the opportunity to play his ace card and reduce interest rates. The FT-SE 100 index closed 24.1 up at 2,574.8 in thin trading. But dealers fear a setback for share prices when trading resumes.

Brian Tarrel, head of market-making at BZW, was unimpressed by the Chancellor's performance. "He has not provided a tremendous boost to industry. The City is now closely watching the reaction of the pound." After the strong gains in the index during the past couple of days, BZW is looking for an initial mark-down of between ten and twenty points. "But the market may well recover all of those losses later in the day," Mr Tarrel said.

His views were echoed by Bob Semple, equity market strategist at County NatWest WoodMac, the broker. "The Chancellor got off on the wrong foot with his opening gambit of doubling the PSBR target to £28 billion. He has reduced his chances of a cut in interest rates."

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UK could better German inflation

BY COLIN NARBROUGH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

PRICE inflation in western Germany accelerated last month to a year-on-year figure of 4.3 per cent, up from 4 per cent in January. That means Britain's rate of price increases could soon be lower than that in what has traditionally been Europe's best performer on inflation, for the first time in almost a quarter of a century.

Britain's retail price index, out on Friday next week, is expected to show annual inflation falling below 4 per cent from 4.1 per cent in January.

Norman Lamont, the Chancellor, jumped the gun last October when he told the Conservative party conference that he expected to preside over the inflation cross-over with Germany "soon".

Government data published yesterday, before the Budget, showed factory gate prices charged by British manufacturers rising 0.4 per cent in February for an annual increase of 4.4 per cent, unchanged from January.

That was the lowest annual increase for four years. Excluding the volatile food, drink and tobacco sector, the underlying annual rise was 2.8 per cent, down from 3.1 per cent in January.

Keith Skeoch, chief economist at James Capel, said the

latest three-month comparison suggested an underlying annual rate of just 2.2 per cent.

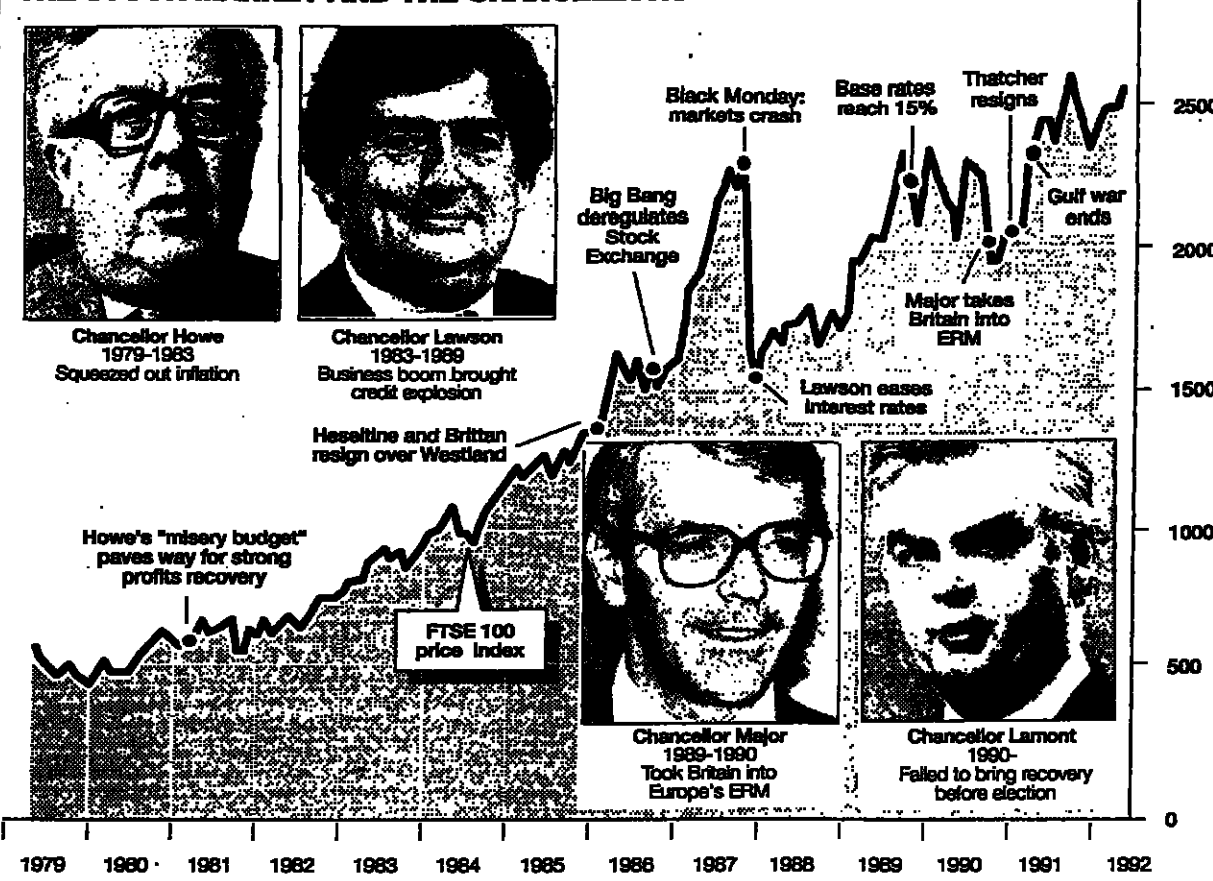
Gerard Lyons, chief economist at DKB International, said an important difference between Germany and Britain was that unification had pushed up inflation for the Germans, while recession had pushed it down in Britain.

Provisional figures showed a 0.6 per cent rise in the cost of living in western Germany last month. The annual rate is expected to rise further in the months ahead, peaking at about 4.5 per cent. Rising inflation is expected to prevent the Bundesbank from lowering key interest rates until the third quarter.

The prices British manufacturers paid for raw materials and fuel rose at a higher rate in February than in January. The seasonally adjusted rise of 1.6 per cent last month was above what City forecasters had expected.

The worrying jump, which was the first monthly increase since last July, turned January's annual decline of 1.1 per cent into an annual rise of 0.5 per cent. Higher livestock prices were given as the main reason. Economists note the less belief that British core inflation is heading down.

THE STOCK MARKET AND THE CHANCELLORS



Allied's Carlsberg venture referred

BY OUR CITY STAFF

ALLIED-LYONS, the drinks, food and retailing group, has received its second setback from the Office of Fair Trading in six weeks to its attempts to restructure the pubs and brewing interests. Peter Lilley, the trade secretary, has referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission the proposed £510 million joint venture between Allied and Carlsberg, the Danish brewer, agreed in October and hailed by the partners as "probably the best merger in the world".

Sir Gordon Borrie, the director general of fair trading, has taken a different view, and his advice has been followed by Mr Lilley. The news came as a shock to Allied, whose shares immediately dropped 12p to 638p before rallying to 642p.

The commission is required to report on the link, which foresees a 50/50 joint venture for Allied's and Carlsberg's brewing interests controlling 16 to 17 per cent of the British beer market, by June 12.

Malcolm Wright, corporate and finance director of the Allied Breweries offshoot, said the group was "naturally disappointed" at the reference but remained committed to the merger and was confident it would go ahead in due course.

Mr Lilley has ruled that the venture "raises competition issues in the UK market for beer which deserve investigation".

The deal also required Brent Walker to take a large proportion of its beer from Allied's breweries. It was formally cleared by Mr Lilley on advice from the OFT, but Sir Gordon insisted that the pubs disposal, on a leasing basis, was not a sale and the houses would still be counted as part of Allied's tied estate.

Restructuring costs push Saatchi to £62m losses

BY MARTIN WALLER

SAATCHI & Saatchi, the recession-battered advertising combine, has put in place a profits-related incentive scheme aimed at locking in 300 senior staff in advance of any upturn in the industry.

The news came as Saatchi announced a £62.3 million loss for 1991 attributable to shareholders after a raft of provisions reflecting redundancies, falling property values and subsidiary closures. The loss would have been far higher but for last year's recapitalisation and the accompanying redemption of the group's euro-preference shares - on terms that drew criticism from their holders - which threw up a £118 million below-the-line surplus.

There is again no dividend. Pre-tax losses for the year to end-December were £58.4 million. The group has changed its financial year end from end-September to the 15 months to end-December. Losses before tax were £63.6 million, against profits of £35.6 million in the year to end-September 1990.

Robert Louis-Dreyfus, the chief executive, said that all the necessary provisions and redundancies to restructure the group were now in place. He expects 1992 profits to be relatively clean and to reflect more accurately actual performance. City estimates are for pre-tax profits between £17 million and £20 million.

He said the first half of 1991 had been dominated by the recapitalisation and the second half by improvements to the structure and costs. "The process has been made more difficult by poor trading conditions in many of the largest advertising markets of the world," he added. But since November there had been some signs of an upturn.

The group has operated above budget since November. "Whilst we are not budgeting for any increase in revenues, there are grounds for hoping that 1992 will mark the start of a sustainable improvement in operating margins and profitability," M. Louis-Dreyfus said.

The management incentive programme will be based on individual budget targets set

annually at the various subsidiaries around the group. If these are exceeded, the chosen executives will receive a bonus, delayed for three years to lock them into the business. Main board directors, including Maurice and Charles Saatchi, the founders, will have their entitlements judged against the performance of the group as a whole. The scheme specifically excludes M. Louis-Dreyfus, recruited to pull Saatchi back from the brink early in 1990. The scheme reflects the fear that as the industry moves out of recession, executives will be poached by competitors.

The figures feature provisions to get Saatchi on an even keel, including £113.2 million as the cost of writing off the value of leases for the 100,000 sq ft of vacant office space Saatchi holds.

Trading profits fell from £40.2 million for 1990 to £20.5 million. Interest costs fell from £27.8 million to £24 million as borrowings fell from a peak of £277 million in 1990 to a maximum of £226 million in the year.

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Elliott linked to Foster's moves

FROM BRIAN BUCHANAN IN SYDNEY

NERVOUS executives at Foster's Brewing fear an attempted comeback by John Elliott, the former chairman, after the resignation yesterday of Peter Bartels, the chief executive.

Mr Elliott's International Brewing Holdings still owns 37.75 per cent of the brewer. IBH is strapped for cash and would like higher dividend payments. Now, Mr Elliott has found an ally in Asahi, the Japanese brewer and Foster's other main shareholder.

Nobby Clark, Foster's chairman, said its outlook would not change nor would its strategy to become a single-purpose brewer. He said it was "with deep personal regret" that he accepted the resignation of Mr Bartels, who had been with Foster's for 17 years. Mr Bartels is considered likely to take over as chief executive of Coles Myer, a top retailer.

His resignation is being viewed in some quarters as increasing the influence at board level of deputy chairman John Elliott's International Brewing Holdings. The pressure for higher dividends is seen as potentially in conflict



Bartels: conflict over strategy with the long-term management strategy set by Mr Bartels.

The market may have already allowed for Mr Bartels' departure, which was flagged last week, with Foster's shares closing down Aus1 cent at Aus\$1.91.

Ted Kunkel, the executive chairman of Molson Breweries of Canada, a joint venture between Foster's and Molson Co, will replace Mr Bartels. Mr Kunkel,

a New Zealander, has worked previously for Carlton & United Breweries, the Foster's Brewing arm. He takes over from today but will stay at Molson until May to "provide continuity in transition", Mr Clark said.

"Ted Kunkel is the unanimous choice of the board," he said. "He has been in the brewing business for 24 years." Mr Kunkel is considered a no-nonsense Kiwi, with a strong reputation in all aspects of brewing. Before moving to Australia, he worked for New Zealand Breweries, now Lion Nathan, which these days is a direct rival to Foster's.

He started with CUB in Melbourne and moved to Sydney when Foster's, then Elders IXL, took over Tooheys. He also launched Foster's into the Sydney market before moving to Canada.

He has won much praise for his work in Canada, overseeing the merger of Carling O'Keefe, Foster's subsidiary, with the Molson brewing arm, and the subsequent rationalisation.

A former colleague in Melbourne said Mr Kunkel earned the respect of people quickly. Because he had been removed from the recent tension at Foster's, he was "probably a good in-house choice".

TODAY IN BUSINESS

SMALLER BEERS



The De Beers diamond group has reported lower profits and little prospect of an increase in prices. But the group is in no hurry to sell the Centenary diamond. Page 28

LINES OUT

Richard Lines, the founder of MTM, has resigned after profit warnings, and the finance director will follow soon. Page 30

HOLIDAY RUSH



Buoyant package holiday operators are expecting a rush of enquiries after the general election, with bookings up 10 per cent. Page 29

STRONGER

Strong & Fisher, the rescued leather group, is paying its first dividend for two years after making nearly £10 million profit. Page 28

GLYNWED GROANS



Profits at Glynwed International, the industrial group headed by Gareth Davies, fell nearly two-thirds. Tempos, page 30

THE POUND

US dollar 1.7187 (-0.0045)
German mark 2.8697 (+0.0023)
Exchange index 90.1 (-0.1)
Bank of England official close (4pm)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 share 2006.6 (+22.2)
FT-SE 100 2574.8 (+24.1)
New York Dow Jones 3234.12 (+19.00)
Tokyo Nikkei Ave 20854.59 (+56.91)

INTEREST RATES

London: Bank Base: 10 1/4%
3-month Interbank 10 1/2-10 3/4%
3-month eligible bills 9 1/2-9 3/4%
US: Prime Rate 6 1/4%
Federal Funds 5 1/4%
3-month Treasury Bills 4.01-4.00%
30-year bonds 10 1/2-10 1/4%

CURRENCIES

London: New York
£: \$1.7187
£: DM2.8697
£: Sfr2.8004
£: FF6.7280
£: FF5.6775
£: Yen132.84
£: Index 50.1
ECU 160.712056
SDR 160.79267
£: ECU1.404383
£: SDR1.280809
London forex market close

GOLD

London Fixing:
AM \$348.90 pm \$348.35
close \$348.30-348.70 (£202.60-203.10)
New York:
Comex \$348.25-349.75

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent (Mar) \$17.45 bbl (\$17.35)

RETAIL PRICES

RPI: 135.6 January (1987-100)
* Denotes midday trading price

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Results for 1991

The audited profit for the year ended 31 December 1991 attributable to the shareholders of HSBC Holdings plc was HK\$5,664 million, compared with the profit reported by The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited (HongkongBank) in 1990 of HK\$3,096 million, an increase of 82.9 per cent. The profit was arrived at after providing for taxation and after transfers to inner reserves by subsidiary undertakings.

The Directors recommend the payment of a final dividend of HK\$1.31 per Ordinary Share on 26 May 1992 to shareholders who are registered as at the close of business on 1 May 1992. With the interim distribution of HK\$878 million already paid, the total distribution for 1991 will amount to HK\$3,013 million, compared with the HK\$2,518 million distributed by HongkongBank in 1990, an increase of 19.7 per cent. The dividend will be payable in cash with a scrip alternative.

Hongkong Bank 1990		HSBC Holdings plc 1991		
HK\$m		HK\$m	£m	US\$m
3,961	Total Group profit	6,770	465	870
(865)	Profit attributable to minorities	(1,106)	(76)	(142)
3,096	Profit attributable to shareholders	5,664	389	728
(2,518)	Dividends	(3,013)	(207)	(387)
578	Retained profit for the year	2,651	182	341

HK \$		HK \$	£	US \$
1.93 (adjusted)	Earnings per share	3.49	0.24	0.45
0.52 (adjusted)	Dividends per share Interim	0.54	0.04	0.07
1.04 (adjusted)	Final (proposed)	1.31	0.09	0.17

31 December 1990		31 December 1991		
HK\$m		HK\$m	£m	US\$m
1,158,256	Total assets	1,248,796	85,786	160,503
53,502	Shareholders' funds	56,286	3,867	7,234

Real economic activity in the world's industrial nations stagnated in 1991, despite repeated reductions in interest rates. The economies of Hong Kong and the rest of East Asia, however, improved although inflation continued to give cause for concern. Against this background, most of the Group's Asian banking operations reported improved results, particularly in Hong Kong, where both HongkongBank and Hang Seng Bank, its 61.48 per cent owned subsidiary, achieved strong profit growth. HongkongBank reported consolidated profits, after taxation and transfers to inner reserves, of HK\$5,869 million. This profit includes its share of the HK\$2,811.4 million profit reported by Hang Seng Bank.

Marine Midland Bank reported a US\$189.9 million net loss for the year, compared with a net loss of US\$295.6 million in 1990. The reduced loss reflects the improving position of Marine but the prolonged recession in the United States continues to affect the speed of Marine's recovery.

Hongkong Bank of Canada had a satisfactory year in difficult economic conditions and reported net income of C\$51.8 million, an increase of 6 per cent over 1990.

HongkongBank of Australia reported a net loss of A\$37.8 million for 1991. This compared favourably with the loss of A\$273.2 million reported in 1990 and reflects the progress which has been made in returning the Group's operations in Australia towards profitability.

In the United Kingdom, HongkongBank reported a satisfactory profit after the loss reported in 1990. The British Bank of the Middle East (BBME) reported a profit of £37.4 million, compared with £31.1 million in 1990. BBME's associate, The Saudi British Bank, achieved increased profits despite the difficult trading conditions in the early part of the year.

Group capital markets activities – merchant banking, broking and funds management – achieved a satisfactory profit in 1991. Strong performances in funds management and merchant banking were balanced by a more modest contribution from broking, except in Asia and New York where market conditions helped provide good results. The Wardley merchant banking results were buoyed by exceptionally good performances in private banking and broking: the Wardley Group reported a profit of HK\$567.1 million. The James Capel Group recovered strongly from 1990 losses and made a profit of £6.1 million. Its market share improved in almost all major markets. Overall, the Group's capital markets activities achieved profits of HK\$725.6 million.

CM&M, the Group's primary dealer in US government securities, recorded a significantly increased profit of US\$9.3 million.

Although the specific provision charge for doubtful debts showed a significant reduction in 1991 it nevertheless continued at a high level in a number of areas and, given the uncertain outlook for the world economy, the opportunity has been taken to increase general provisions in most subsidiaries.

During the year, no Ordinary Shares in HSBC Holdings were purchased, sold or redeemed by HSBC Holdings or any of its subsidiary companies.

Outlook for 1992

The outlook for 1992 is uncertain, particularly in the major industrialised economies. Any recovery in the USA, Canada and the UK is likely to be largely offset by falling economic growth in Japan and Germany. In Hong Kong, however, the economy is expected to maintain its momentum, supported by continued growth in South China; and East Asia as a whole is expected to grow faster than the rest of the world. Against this background, your Directors expect, in the absence of unforeseen circumstances, to recommend dividends for 1992 of not less than HK\$2.00 per Ordinary Share, an 8.1 per cent increase over the dividends for 1991.

Closing of the Register of Shareholders in Hong Kong

The Overseas Branch Register of Shareholders in Hong Kong will be closed from 4 May to 8 May 1992 (both dates inclusive). Any person who has acquired shares but who has not lodged the share transfer with the Registrars should do so before 4.00 p.m. on 1 May 1992 in order to receive the dividend.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Level 18, 1 Queen's Road Central, Hong Kong, on Tuesday, 26 May 1992 at 3.00 p.m.

By Order of the Board
R G Barber
Secretary

Hong Kong, 10 March 1992

The information in this announcement does not comprise statutory accounts within the meaning of section 240 of the Companies Act 1985. The statutory accounts for the year ended 31 December 1991, which contain an unqualified auditors' report and which do not contain a statement under section 237(2) or (3) of the Act, will be delivered to the Registrar of Companies in England and Wales in accordance with section 242 of the Act.

Diamond group expects sales upturn

De Beers' earnings decline by a fifth

By COLIN CAMPBELL
MINING CORRESPONDENT

DE BEERS diamond group, which embraces in one trading unit the group's interests in and outside South Africa, suffered a 19.7 per cent fall in net attributable earnings in 1991. The year's dividend payment, however, goes up. Attributable profits eased from \$950 million to \$763 million in the year to December. Profits, including those of associated companies, were \$1.08 billion against \$1.32 billion. The total dividend paid on De Beers' linked units, however, rises marginally from 111.3 cents to 112.1 cents.

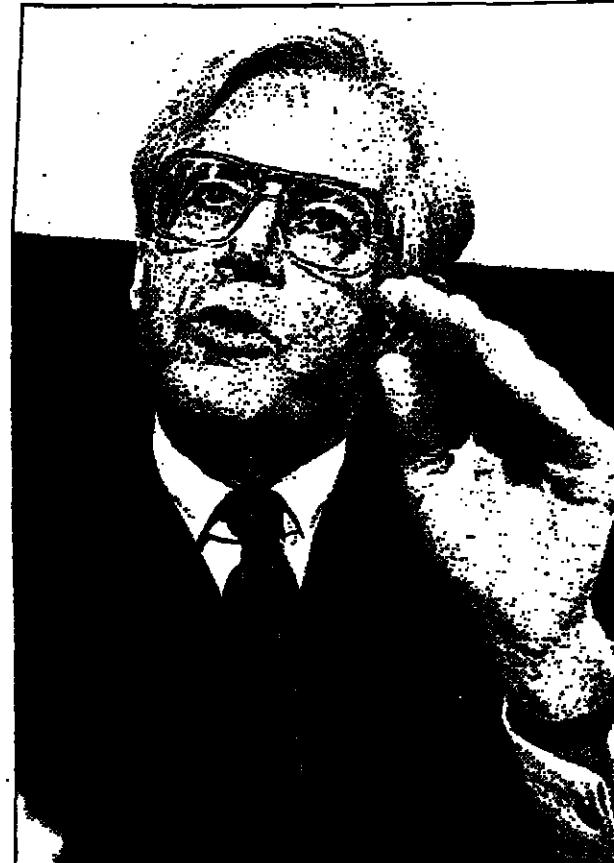
Julian Ogilvie Thompson, the chairman, declined to comment specifically on diamond sales conducted so far this year by the Central Selling Organisation marketing company. However, he said he looked forward to an upturn in world economic activity in 1992, which would lead to increased diamond business.

The CSO last raised rough diamond prices in March, 1990 and Mr Ogilvie Thompson said market conditions did not suggest a price increase was "likely at the moment".

CSO rough diamond sales in 1991 fell from \$4.17 billion to \$3.93 billion. De Beers' results show that the margin on the diamond account slipped from 21.86 per cent to 20.44 per cent last year.

The group earned \$212 million from investments outside the diamond industry, against \$227 million. Diamond stocks stood at \$3.03 billion at the year-end – an increase of \$350 million over 1990 levels.

The loan and marketing



Looking for an upturn: Julian Ogilvie Thompson

arrangements with the Russian Federation were still in place, though De Beers was not undertaking exploration activity in Russia, the group said. Exploration activity in North America continues, though no significant discoveries have been reported. Production from Namibian mines rose in 1991, and mining for diamonds from coastal waters off southern Africa continues. The group was increasing efforts to contain their at its operations, the chairman said.

De Beers has not yet sold the polished 272 carat diamond that was cut out of an original 599 carat find and is known as Centenary diamond. Analysts suggest the stone, which is the largest flawless diamond in the world, outside the Crown Jewels, is worth a conservative \$100 million. Asked when Centenary might be sold, Mr Ogilvie Thompson said he was in no hurry.

De Beers derives widespread publicity from the Centenary diamond and, in any case, Mr Ogilvie Thompson said, "as the song goes... We have grown accustomed to its face".

Strong ends its dividend famine

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH

STRONG & FISHER, the leather group rescued by Hillsdown Holdings last year, is making a recovery after its capital reconstruction, which left Hillsdown with 70.3 per cent of the group. S&F is paying its first dividend since December 1989.

S&F made pre-tax profits of £9.9 million in the year to end-December 1991. The group is reporting for an 18-month period to end-December 1991, compared with 12 months to end-June 1991. In that period, pre-tax profits were £2.43 million compared with a loss of £17.5 million.

Turnover was £114 million (£83.7 million) and there was a £4.55 million exceptional charge for the writedown of stocks, compared with an exceptional charge of £9.14 million. Earnings per share were 0.54p, against a loss of 100.6p per share, and the 1p dividend for the year compares with the 2p interim dividend declared in December 1989.

There was an extraordinary charge of £1.49 million made up of the profit on the disposal of S&F's holding in Pittard Garnar, the rival leather group, minus the costs of the transformation of capital ownership, management and operations of the group. In the previous period, the extraordinary charge was £16.7 million.

Michael Buswell, the new chairman of the group and a director of Hillsdown, said the group intended to add a third leg to the business to reduce its dependence on clothing leather.

A change in the support payment to farmers on sheep meat at the beginning of the current year has affected S&F's ability to procure adequate quantities of sheepskins at a realistic price and the group is concerned at the effect of this on profits for the current half-year.

DTI looks into deals at printers

By MARTIN BARROW

TRADE department inspectors investigating share dealings in Wace, the pre-press services company at the centre of insider trading allegations, have been asked to submit reports on share dealings in two other companies in the printing sector under Section 442 of the Companies Act 1985.

Anthony Robertshaw and Christopher Mayhew have been appointed inspectors to investigate deals in European Colour, a South London chemical colour maker, and Tinsley Robor, a specialist printer and packager.

They have been asked to examine acquisitions by third parties of shares in each company that might have been a preliminary to a possible takeover or merger. The inspectors will not investigate the affairs of either company.

BM Group rises to £17.3m

BM Group, the construction equipment maker, raised pre-tax profits from £13.5 million to £17.3 million in the half-year to end-December.

The interim dividend rose from 1.6p a share to 2.1p, and earnings to 13.3p from 11.3p. Shareholders took up 96 per cent of a £60 million cash call to fund the £42 million acquisition of Thomas Robinson, an engineer.

BM is making a mandatory bid for British Building and Engineering Appliances after raising its stake from 25.9 per cent to 83.7 per cent. BM is offering 355p cash, valuing BB&EA at £4.3 million, but is advising minority holders to reject the offer.

Tempos, page 30

Wates falls

Wates City of London, the property group, is holding the final dividend at 2.96p, making 3.73p. The payout is held despite a fall in pre-tax profits from £30.5 million to £8.2 million and in net assets per share from 220p to 151p.

Tempos, page 30

Wyevale ahead

Wyevale Garden Centres, the USM group, raised pre-tax profits 36 per cent to £2.86 million in 1991. Turnover rose 24.7 per cent to £22.8 million. Earnings per share rose 2.3 per cent to 8.8p and the final dividend is 1.24p, making 3.72p for the year.

Losses cut

Conrad Continental, the leisurewear maker, cut pre-tax losses from £680,000 to £378,000 in the year to December. Again there is no dividend.

Rights fails

Only 27.5 per cent of the £10.7 million Bromsgrove Industries rights issue was taken by shareholders at 105p a share.

BHP successor

Brian Loton, BHP deputy chairman, becomes chairman on June 1.

Randsworth placed in receivership

By MATTHEW BOND

RANDSWORTH Acquisition, the American-backed company that took over Randsworth Trust, the London property group, in 1989, has been placed in administrative receivership. Citibank, its principal banker, called in KPMG Peat Marwick after months of negotiations failed to produce agreement on how the company's £185 million of debt could be refinanced.

Randsworth Trust was originally taken over by JMB Realty of Chicago, but the £258 million deal was syndicated. The shareholder register of Randsworth Acquisition, the company created by JMB for the purposes of the takeover, expanded to include 16 American institutions and ABP, a Dutch pension fund. JMB's role was reduced to that of syndicate agent and 15 per cent shareholder.

Randsworth had risen meteorically in a booming London property market. Guided by David Holland and Andrew Nicols, the company had taken over London & Provincial Shop and Apex Properties, and bought portfolios from Mountleigh, British Land and the Fisons and Imperial Group pension funds.

However, the property market fell virtually from the day the American syndicate completed the deal. That prompted the raising of a further £60 million of equity in 1990. It has been difficult to sell property to reduce gearing and difficult to let completed developments.

Citibank has indicated it is prepared to manage the property portfolio, but it must also be giving serious thought to selling its equity interest in the company.

Plaxton loses profit power

By MARTIN BARROW

PLAXTON Group, a motor distributor and coach builder, made losses of £6.8 million before tax in 1991. There was a 40 per cent fall in sales volume in the coach and bus division. The previous year, the company earned pre-tax

profits of £4.2 million. Losses included an exceptional charge of £2.86 million against reorganisation costs, compared with an exceptional credit of £2.82 million in the previous 12 months. An extraordinary charge of £2.1

million to cover the cost of closing Carrosserie Lorraine, a coach-building business in France, has left the group with total losses of £8.4 million, against a £3.46 million surplus last time.

Despite losses of 16.7p a share (earnings of 9.1p), the company is increasing the final dividend from 1.5p a share to 2p, although the total payout is reduced from 4.5p to 3p.

The company, with Robert Wood, chief executive, at the helm, plans to change its name to Henlys Group, to reflect the growing emphasis on motor distribution. That now accounts for 70 per cent of turnover.

Michael Doherty, appointed chairman after the resignation of David Matthews in November, was chairman of Henlys before its acquisition by Plaxton in 1989. He said year-end borrowings were broadly unchanged at £31 million, despite inclusion of £7 million of debt from associated companies.



Hard road: Michael Doherty (left) and Robert Wood

LOGICA (Int)
Pre-tax: £2.18m (£4.67m)
EPS: 2.1p (4.4p)
Div: 1.15p (1.15p)

CASTLE COMMS (Int)
Pre-tax: £853,000
EPS: 7.4p (7.1p)
Div: 4p (4p)

PACER SYSTEMS (Fin)
Pre-tax: Loss \$1.14m
LPS: 13c (8c)
Div: 3.5c, mkg 6.5c

Forward order books for Britain, North America and Asia Pacific improved, despite difficult trading conditions in continental Europe.

Last time's profit was £769,000. Turnover fell to £15.6m (£19.4m). Recession is expected to affect second half audio and video sales.

Last time's profit was \$1.58m. Last time's total dividend was 8.5c. Group revenue declined to \$25.2m (\$27.9m).

CLONALCIN GROUP
Pre-tax: £13.6m (£11.9m)
EPS: 25.08p (22.84p)
Div: 2.88p, mkg 4.381p

AMERICAN TRUST (Fin)
Pre-tax: £5.78m (£5.63m)
EPS: 4.77p (4.51p)
Div: 3.3p, mkg 4.8p

UNIGROUP (Int)
Pre-tax: £304,000
EPS: 0.58p (1.9p)
Div: None

Final results. All figures are in Irish currency. Last time's total dividend was 4.056p. There was an extraordinary debit of £1.65m.

Last time's total dividend was 4.7p. The net asset value rose to 210.3p (161.6p). Investment income edged to 25.8m (£24.6m).

Last time's profit was £708,000. Profits from timber fell 5%, while building products dived 64%. Clothing losses nearly trebled.

Impaled on Wakeham's fork

After a damning report from the Commons energy select committee, it is even clearer that the privatisation of electricity has been one of the government's most comprehensive failures. The last doubts were blown away when John Wakeham, the energy secretary, conceded that the plan for greater competition in supply and generation was working imperfectly and that he would look closely at the committee's detailed criticisms. His indication that the government would consider restricting or even blocking plans for environmentally friendly gas-fired power stations was a sign of much back-tracking. The gas-fired stations, which could be efficient without being huge, were originally crucial to bringing new competition into the generation business. Existing generators also leap into gas generation as a way of meeting environmental targets without spending money on their coal stations.

Mr Wakeham is now impaled uncomfortably on his own fork. Proliferation of gas-fired stations would devastate the coal industry, which his government has been grooming for privatisation. Interference in the gas projects of independents, to leave greater scope for domestic deep-mined coal, could be accomplished only at the expense of competition for PowerGen and National Power.

A compromise is needed fast. The tone of Mr Wakeham's pro-coal responses to the committee findings shows how far he has travelled from the simplistic pre-privatisation visions of his predecessor. Cecil Parkinson had painted a picture in which competition from independent gas generators put pressure on British Coal for cheaper, more efficient production. PowerGen and National Power, by importing cheap foreign coal for part of their needs, were to be agents of market forces that would shape a streamlined coal industry, eventually ready for privatisation after securing economic long-term contracts with generators. The final prize would be lower real electricity prices.

The fatal flaw in this was to regard the privatisation of electricity as an exercise that could be tackled separately from the denationalisation of coal. Free market forces, if allowed to operate, would lead to a proliferation of gas-fired stations built by both generators and independents in collaboration with regional electricity distributors, and the extensive importation of cheap foreign coal. Due to some oddities in the way that the distributors are regulated, this might not produce significantly cheaper electricity. It would, however, cause mass closure of domestic coal mines, with gas contracts working even to oust cheaper coal-fuelled electricity.

If Mr Wakeham can work out a compromise, it is bound to involve more regulation, especially on closures of existing plant and the building of new capacity, and renewed interference in the coal sourcing arrangements of private sector companies.

NatWest puzzle

Lord Alexander, NatWest's chairman, has taken a bold step in asking the DTI to reopen its inspectors' enquiry into the Blue Arrow affair in the hope of clearing the name of Tom Frost, the chief executive and last remaining executive director from those heady days of 1987. For the DTI to accede would be a waste of public money. The 1989 report was not wholly fair or complete but had the virtue of getting to the heart of the matter fast. In any other business, NatWest's poor trading results might have caused the early departure of its chief executive. This cannot happen, it seems, because it might look as though NatWest was still catching up with the Blue Arrow episode. This is rather a circular argument.

Derek Harris looks at package holidays

a year after the collapse of the International Leisure Group

The package holiday industry, with sales of £4 billion a year, is thriving while many other sectors are savaged by the recession. Britons, beset with a stagnant housing market, are not inclined to buy goods for the home, in spite of earnings being ahead of inflation and the fall in mortgage interest payments. Instead, they are taking a "to hell with it all" attitude and planning a couple of weeks in the sun.

This, at least, is the theory presented by tour operators as they bask in summer 1992 foreign package bookings ahead of 1990. Last summer, in the wake of the Gulf war, ended 7 per cent down.

Pre-election uncertainties trimmed bookings last month, but once the election is over a surge of bookings should emerge. This has been the pattern after previous general elections.

Winter package holidays, helped by good snow on the Continent, are 20 per cent up this year, the Association of British Travel Agents says. The full year is expected to yield a 10 per cent increase in package holidays abroad. Last year, there were just over 10.5 million bookings against 11.4 million in 1990, yet profits were at a record.

This followed the collapse, a year ago, of Harry Goodman's International Leisure Group (ILG) — including Intasun package holidays and the Air Europe airline. The company's failure cleared excess capacity in the industry and brought healthy profits to most tour operators, as pricing battles receded and margins fattened.

Thomson Holidays, part of the Canadian Thomson group, is the heavyweight in the British market, with about a third share. Owners Abroad, which includes Sovereign, Enterprise and Sun-Med, is number two, with 18 per cent. Airtours, based in Lancashire, has about 14 per cent of the market.

Airtours was the spectacular stock market performer last year, seeing more than a 400 per cent increase in its share price as profits quadrupled. Owners Abroad, from a higher base, also saw a substantial share price climb as profits doubled. Some analysts see room for the share prices to rise further, but elsewhere there are doubts. This

Travel firms ready to fight on the beaches for market share



Away from it all: travel operators are hoping holiday bookings will hold up this year

is largely because of fears of a price war among the package holidays tour operators.

That could mean a return to wafer-thin profit margins, as when ILG and Thomson slugged it out and some holiday prices dropped to £5 for a week in Spain. Such warfare brought down operators like Horizon, now part of Thomson, and Redwing, linked to British Airways and then sold to Owners Abroad.

Memories of those times were stirred when Airtours brought out its summer 1992 brochures with keen prices. Owners Abroad subsequently made aggressively tagged offers. Adding to the siren songs on price, Thomson brought in a "price breakers" offer that cut about £50 off a range of holidays.

Charles Newbold, managing director of Thomson tour operations, was sending a shot across the bows of Thomson's two nearest rivals. He is determined to maintain market share. "We will not allow our share to go below a third. So long as any competitor stays below the 20 per cent we shall feel comfortable with that," he said.

Owners Abroad and Airtours have been the main beneficiaries of the demise of ILG, possibly picking up as much as half ILG's carryings of about 1.6 million holidays between them. Pre-ILG, Airtours had about 8 per cent of the market, so it is close to

doubling its market penetration. With its offerings more at the budget end of the market, Airtours has probably gained most in volume from ILG's disappearance. Owners Abroad has put on possibly 5 per cent, an element being its Redwing acquisition.

Mr Newbold believes the emphasis on price arises from the battle between Owners Abroad and Airtours for second place. He said: "They can take what they like from each other." He thinks there is some room for their seizing share from smaller operators, but not much.

One analyst said: "This year there could be market growth of more than 10 per cent. With that and the good

work on margins companies like Owners Abroad and Airtours are punting through, profits should be higher this year than last."

Not everybody in the industry is as sanguine as that. Mr Newbold does not see last year's record profits — "donated by Mr Goodman" — being repeated this year.

Up to Christmas, bookings for summer 1992, according to Thomson, were about 13 per cent up on 1990, which is a better comparison than the Gulf war year. January was strong, with increases approaching 15 per cent. February dropped back to about 1990 levels. However, Thomson has done well because of the price breakers promotion.

Beyond the election, Mr Newbold has a special anxiety. He believes that the tim-

ing of the ILG withdrawal last year meant there was insufficient time for others in the market to over-compensate. The result was that supply and demand were in balance. That meant no late discounting to clear the shelves and the consequent erosion of profit margins.

Mr Newbold said: "This summer it could be different. My concern is that there could be more holidays on sale than there will be people wanting to buy them. There are probably half a million too many holidays on sale at the moment so that there might need to be significant discounting towards the end of the season."

This is in spite of signs of some operators reducing their volumes by taking a proportion of holidays off the

market. Mr Newbold added: "It is very difficult to see how profits can be as strong this year as last."

Meanwhile, both Airtours and Owners Abroad have been maintaining that their priority is to maximise return to shareholders. Many have interpreted this as meaning neither company wants a price war blood bath.

Some wild cards, however, have been added to the pack. Former Goodman lieutenants have been making inroads with newly-launched tour operations. Among them is Peter Long, former chief executive of the ILG tour operations, who launched Sunworld backed by the Spanish GVI leisure group. After last summer's programme of 250,000 holidays, it is looking to 350,000 this summer.

Another operator is Riva, headed by Jackie Kernaghan, who was managing director of ILG's Global and Lancaster operations. She said: "I didn't want to do an ILG lookalike. Now we are shooting for 100,000 this summer, which is a high figure for first season carryings."

The main Riva programme is more up-market, there is a budget family-oriented brand plus a seat-sales-only operation. By the end of January, 25,000 holidays had been sold. Sunworld and Riva could between them account for about 4 per cent of the market this summer, which would be approaching the size of the veteran Cosmos, which has gained market share post-ILG.

As recession evaporates only slowly, a vital question is whether most growth will come at the discounting end of the business.

If that happened, pricing battles would intensify. Some in the industry are also concerned about the possibility of a hung parliament and jitters over a possible autumn election unsettling the market at high season. Would the punters still say "to hell with it" and take a holiday?

HSBC Holdings plc

Incorporated in England with limited liability. Registered number 617877
Group Head Office: 1 Queen's Road Central, Hong Kong
Registered Office: 99 Bishopsgate, London, EC2P 2LA, United Kingdom



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Company will be held on Level 18, 1 Queen's Road Central, Hong Kong, on Tuesday 26 May 1992 at 3.00 p.m., to transact the following ordinary business:

- to receive and consider the Annual Accounts and the Reports of the Directors and of the Auditors for the year ended 31 December 1991 and to declare a final dividend;
 - to re-elect Directors;
 - to fix the remuneration of Directors;
- and by way of special business to consider and (if thought fit) pass the following resolutions which will be proposed as Ordinary Resolutions:
- THAT KPMG Peat Marwick (Chartered Accountants) be and are hereby appointed Auditors of the Company from the conclusion of this Meeting until the conclusion of the next General Meeting of the Company at which accounts are laid, at remuneration to be fixed by the Directors;
 - THAT the Directors be and they are hereby generally and unconditionally authorised pursuant to and for the purposes of section 80 of the Companies Act 1985 ("the Act") to exercise all the powers of the Company to allot relevant securities (within the meaning of that section) up to an aggregate nominal amount of HK\$3,698,512,180 provided that this authority shall be limited so that, otherwise than pursuant to (i) a rights issue where relevant securities are offered to shareholders on a fixed record date in proportion to their then holdings of shares (subject to such exclusions or other arrangements as the Directors may deem necessary or expedient in relation to fractional entitlements or having regard to any restrictions or obligations under the laws of or the requirements of any recognised regulatory body or stock exchange in any territory outside Hong Kong or otherwise howsoever), or (ii) any scrip dividend scheme or similar arrangements implemented in accordance with the Articles of Association of the Company, the nominal amount of the relevant securities to be allotted by the Directors pursuant to this authority shall not in aggregate exceed HK\$3,698,512,180 (equal to 5 per cent of the nominal amount of the issued Ordinary share capital of the Company as at the date of this Meeting) and such authority shall expire at the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting of the Company to be held in 1993 save that this authority shall allow the Company before the expiry of this authority to make offers or agreements which would or might require relevant securities to be allotted after such expiry and the Directors may allot relevant securities in pursuance of such offers or agreements as if the authority conferred hereby had not expired;
- and the following resolution which will be proposed as a Special Resolution:
- THAT, subject to the passing of Resolution No.5 set out in the Notice convening this Meeting, the Directors be and they are hereby empowered, pursuant to section 95 of the Companies Act 1985 ("the Act"), to allot equity securities (as defined in section 94 of the Act) pursuant to the authority conferred by the aforesaid Resolution No.5 as if section 89 (1) of the Act did not apply to any such allotment, provided that this power shall expire at the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting of the Company to be held in 1993 save that this power shall enable the Company prior to the expiry of this power to make offers or agreements which would or might require equity securities to be allotted after the expiry of this power and the Directors may allot equity securities in pursuance of such offers or agreements as if the power conferred hereby had not expired.

By Order of the Board
R G Barber
Secretary

Hong Kong, 10 March 1992

Notes

- A member entitled to attend and vote at the Meeting is entitled to appoint one or more proxies to attend and, on a poll, vote instead of him. A proxy need not be a member. Completion and return of an instrument appointing a proxy will not preclude a member from attending and voting in person at the Meeting.
- In order to be valid, the instrument appointing a proxy and the power of attorney or other authority (if any) under which it is signed, or a copy of such authority certified notari-ally or in some other way approved by the Board, must be deposited at the offices of the Registrars, National Westminster Bank PLC, Registrar's Department, PO Box 82, Cannon House, Redcliffe Way, Bristol BS9 7NL, United Kingdom, or at the offices of the Registrars in Hong Kong, Central Registration Hong Kong Limited, Hopewell Centre, 19th Floor, 183 Queen's Road East, Hong Kong, not less than 48 hours before the time of the holding of the Meeting (or any adjourned meeting).
- In the case of joint registered holders of any share, the vote of the senior who tenders a vote, whether in person or by proxy, shall be accepted to the exclusion of the votes of the other joint holders. For this purpose seniority shall be determined by the order in which the names of the holders stand in the Principal Register or the Hong Kong Overseas Branch Register as appropriate.
- Consequent upon the commencement of Part II of the Companies Act 1989 the auditors of the Company to be appointed at this Meeting are required to be a member of a recognised supervisory body in the United Kingdom. Accordingly, KPMG Peat Marwick (Chartered Public Accountants) retire as Auditors at this Meeting and do not seek reappointment. KPMG Peat Marwick (Chartered Accountants), which is an associated firm of the retiring Auditors and which is also resident in Hong Kong, has been authorised by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales as a Registered Auditor and is accordingly eligible for appointment. Special Notice to propose Resolution No.4 has been received.
- The general purpose of the authority to be conferred on the Directors by Resolutions Nos. 5 and 6 above is to enable the Directors to issue shares up to a specified number without having first to obtain the consent of shareholders in general meeting. The need for such an issue of shares could, for example, arise in the context of a transaction (such as the acquisition of a company) which had to be completed speedily. The granting of such an authority is now commonplace and the Directors take the view that it would be in the interests of the Company if the authority were granted to them. The Directors have undertaken that no capital will be issued which would effectively change the control of the Company or the nature of its business without the prior approval of shareholders in general meeting. They have at this time no plans to issue additional shares under this authority other than in accordance with the scrip dividend scheme.
- None of the Directors proposed for re-election at the Meeting has a service contract with the Company or a subsidiary undertaking which is not determinable within one year without payment of compensation.

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

All for one, one for all

ALL great business deals, it is said, are put together on the golf course — usually at the expense of the game itself. Not when one of the players is Dorian Wharton-Hood, vice-chairman of Liberty Life, the South African insurance group, and a former Springbok golfer. Wharton-Hood, aged 53, who came to London in October to promote Liberty's £82 million share issue, was playing in a friendly game in Cape Town ten days ago when he hit a hole-in-one. "It is only the second hole-in-one I have hit," says Wharton-Hood, who played for South Africa in 1964 and ran the local operations of Prudential before they were sold to Liberty in 1986. "It bounced twice and went straight in. I ended up buying drinks for the whole golf club." As an insurance man, he should have known better. For a small fee, golfers can take out insurance cover to guard against this very event.

Unlucky break

THE Geneva Motor Show, one of the busiest events on the annual motor calendar, has not been without its surprises. Take the lavish annual dinner hosted by Ford, which has been looking a little off-colour of late, what with plunging sales and losses of £990 million in Britain in 1991 between Ford and Jaguar. Guests were eager to see whether Lindsey Halstead, tough-talking chairman of Ford Europe, would have anything to say about future prospects. They were out of luck. Eager to

SAATCHI & SAATCHI



escape the mobs of motoring correspondents. Halstead, aged 62, had taken to the slopes on Monday — only to fall and break his collarbone, hence missing the chance to make an important policy speech at the dinner. Looks like Ford's luck has yet to change.

Wrong handle

EASTERN Europeans are, it seems, still experiencing some difficulty in their attempts to match western European standards of service. A businessman who booked into a hotel in Prague last week says the night porter carried his luggage up to his room, closely scrutinising the suitcase for a name. The next day, when the bill was presented to him at the reception desk, it was marked for the attention of "Mr. Real Leather".

Offshore boom

THE citizens of North Shields, on the north bank of the Tyne east of Newcastle, believe they are on the crest of a boom. The reason for their euphoria is neither a new round of government aid nor

overtures from a large Japanese manufacturer but the arrival, off Tyne, of Freddie the bottle-nosed dolphin who appears to have taken up residence in the area. Freddie recently left the port of Amble on the Northumberland coast after a five-year sojourn during which he brought a flood of tourist revenue into the town. North Shields is pulling out all the stops to make him stay. The local chamber of trade and commerce has made him an honorary life member.

Starless nights

AN idea for the English Tourist Board? According to Executive Travel magazine, the Flemish National Tourist Board publishes an hotel guide in which the "A" category indicates "the possibility of spending the night without the slightest guarantee of comfort".

RANGER Oil is sending out invitations to the inauguration of its Anglia Field next week. The venue? A conference centre in London. So much for that trip to the North Sea.

Bleak Winter

HOPEFUL politicians will do anything for publicity. Hence the antics of Martin Winter, a senior venture capitalist partner at Bidde & Co, the City law firm, and prospective Conservative parliamentary candidate for the marginal seat of Tooting, south London. He has been seen hobnobbing around on crutches. Winter, an accomplished waterski-er, was attempting a waterski jump at Thorpe Park, Surrey, when he landed badly and broke his ankle. This has to be regarded as a

setback to my plans to qualify for the jump event in this year's jump championship," says Winter, who was sixth at slalom in the over 35 age group at the British championships last summer.

Fairey lights

A GROUP of engineering analysts had an unusual briefing on Monday, when they turned up for the results of Fairey. Just as Derek Kingsbury, the chairman, was about to speak, the basement they were in was plunged into darkness. Fast-thinking by the PR adviser saved the day. A team was despatched to a nearby branch of Blacks Leisure to stock up on camping gas lights.

GRAFFITO on a boarded-up window in Swiss Cottage, London: "A lawyer is someone willing to spend every penny you have to prove he's right."

Forex foray

MORE activity at Broadgate, where Lehman Brothers International has coaxed Christopher Deuters away from Citicorp to head its foreign exchange team. Deuters, aged 45, ran Citicorp's European foreign exchange desk and had been with the bank since 1970 — with the exception of a brief spell with Deutsche Bank in the early Eighties. He had an early taste of forex as a teller with Thomas Cook. Deuters joins at about the same time as Dan Tyree, who is deserting Salomon Brothers in New York to run Lehman's UK operations.

JON ASHWORTH

Output forecast to increase by 1% this year

Norman Lamont, in his 'Budget for the recovery', said the slowdown in world growth had taken its toll on the UK economy. Gross domestic product (GDP) fell nearly 2.5 per cent last year, but is expected to resume growth this year, helped by rising exports as the world economy recovers

GDP levelled out in the second half of 1991; in the fourth quarter, it was much the same as in the second quarter. But signs of recovery last summer and early autumn were not sustained. GDP fell by nearly 2½ per cent in 1991 as a whole. Non-oil GDP continued to decline through last year, though at a moderating pace. By the fourth quarter it was 3½ per cent below its peak in the second quarter of 1990.

The failure of the recovery to take hold in the second half of 1991 was part of a pattern of weakening activity in most of the major countries. Similar factors may have been at work in a number of countries, and may have been mutually reinforcing, resulting in a general deterioration in the UK this year. The UK has seen improvement in business and consumer confidence seen earlier in the year. Weaker activity in the rest of the world meant that exports were lower than they would otherwise have been. And domestic demand remained subdued, as consumers and businesses sought further improvements in their financial position. Despite signs of a pick-up in retail sales around the middle of the year, the expected recovery in consumer expenditure did not materialise. And although manufacturing investment levelled out, total business investment continued to fall. Domestic demand fell by 4 per cent between the first and second halves, and by 3 per cent in 1991 as a whole.

Within GDP, the output of the service sector continued to fall in the second half of 1991, though at a slower rate. Energy output rose in the third and fourth quarters, as oil output recovered from the effects of safety-related maintenance work, which depressed output earlier in the year. However, manufacturing output, after levelling out in mid-year, fell by a further 1½ per cent in the fourth quarter, and by 5½ per cent in 1991 as a whole. This is consistent with CBI survey evidence which showed a steady improvement in manufacturers' output expectations until the autumn, but some deterioration since then, once it became clear that the recovery had not become established.

Nevertheless the forces making for recovery are still in place, including the continuing effects of lower interest rates, falling inflation and the automatic fiscal stabilisers. And consumer and business confidence, though lower than in the autumn, remain well above the levels of a year ago. Although growth may be slow at first, it should gather

pace through the year, as consumer spending picks up, recovery in the world economy boosts exports, and destocking comes to an end. GDP is forecast to rise by 1 per cent in 1992, but by nearly 2 per cent in the year to the first half of 1993. The pace of the recovery is expected to be about the same as that following the previous two recessions. Manufacturing output may rise by only ½ per cent in 1992, but is forecast to rise more rapidly than GDP from mid-1992 onwards.

Domestic expenditure

Personal sector: consumer expenditure flattened off in the second half of 1991, having fallen by 2½ per cent in the year to the second quarter. The saving ratio rose sharply through 1990 and levelled off in 1991 at around 10 per cent, historically high for a period of low inflation. Housing investment has also been cut back sharply. The personal sector has therefore moved from substantial financial deficit in 1988 to an estimated surplus of £17½ billion, over 4 per cent of income, in 1991.

A number of factors should help to increase consumer spending. Real personal disposable income, down 4 per cent in 1991, is forecast to rise by a similar amount in 1992. The 4½ point reduction in interest rates since October 1990, and the halving of the inflation rate last year, have yet to have their full effect. And although personal wealth has fallen, largely because of lower house prices, it remains high by all but the standards of the late 1980s. There is scope for the saving ratio to fall back from its current high level without damaging personal sector balance sheets, but the forecast assumes only a modest fall, to 9½ per cent by the first half of 1993.

These positive influences may be offset to some extent by the effects of continuing weakness in the housing market — any recovery here during 1992 is likely to be slow — and by high levels of debt. The rise in the debt-income ratio in the late 1980s was unprecedented, and past relationships provide little guide to how far consumers might now want to retrench. However, a sharp deceleration of personal borrowing stabilised the debt-income ratio in 1991, and some fall is possible during 1992. Lower interest rates mean that the costs of servicing debt have already fallen sharply. As a result, real disposable income for a typical family with a

£30,000 mortgage has risen by over 15 per cent since October 1990.

Consumer expenditure is forecast to rise by 1 per cent in 1992, though the initial pick-up could be slow and the precise timing is uncertain. It is forecast to rise by 1½ per cent in the year to the first half of 1993, and by 3 per cent in the year to the first half of 1994. Housing investment is likely to remain weak for a while before picking up later in the year. The personal sector is expected to remain in substantial financial surplus. Business investment peaked at record levels in early 1990 but has since fallen, as companies have sought to improve their financial position against a backdrop of falling incomes. Business investment fell by 11½ per cent in 1991.

If investment bears its usual relation to the cycle, it may continue to decline for a short time after output has begun to rise, though the fall forecast for 1992 is much less than that seen in 1991. This is consistent with the message from recent business surveys. The CBI balances for optimism and investment intentions have weakened since the autumn statement but remain well above their troughs of a year ago.

Even at its trough in 1992, the ratio of business investment to GDP is forecast to be higher than in any year during the 1970s and the first half of the 1980s, a consequence of the record growth rates seen in the late 1980s. With profitability increasing and the recovery becoming well established, business investment is forecast to rise by 3 per cent in the year to the first half of 1993. And the conditions should be in place for stronger growth thereafter.

Government investment

General government investment fell by 9½ per cent in 1991, but is forecast to rise by 10½ per cent in 1992. The year-on-year growth rates have been distorted by fluctuations in the quarterly pattern of local authority investment, and by the surge in local authority investment at the beginning of 1990 as authorities forestalled the new capital control regime introduced in April of that year. The forecast level of general government investment in 1992 is 24 per cent higher than in 1988 and 50 per cent higher than in 1979.

Stockbuilding

Preliminary indications for 1991 suggest that companies continued to cut their stock

Financial Statement and Budget Report 1992-93

% changes on previous year unless otherwise stated	1991	1992	1993 (F1)	Average annual rate in past 10 years
GDP and domestic demand at constant prices				
Domestic demand of which:				
Consumers' expenditure	-1½	1½	3½	1½
General government consumption	2½	1½	1½	1
Fixed investment	-10½	-½	3½	2½
Change in stockholding (% of GDP)	-½	½	1½	1½
Exports of goods and services	3½	3½	6½	1½
Imports of goods and services	-½	½	2½	2½
GDP (average measure)	-2½	1½	3½	1½
Non-North Sea GDP	-2½	1½	3½	1½
Manufacturing output	-5½	½	3½	1
Balance of Payments				
£ billion	-4½	-6½	-2½	4
per cent of GDP	-½	-1	-½	½
Inflation				
Retail prices index (G4)	4½	3½	3½	1½
Producer output prices (G4)	3½	2½	2½	1½
GDP deflator at mkt prices (incl yr)	7	4½	—	1
Money GDP at mkt prices (incl yr)				
£ billion	584	621	—	—
percentage change	5	6½	—	1½
PSBR (financial year)				
£ billion	19½	28	—	6½
per cent of GDP	2½	4½	—	1

¹ Average annual rate of change over last 10 years (apply to forecasts for 1992 or 1993-94). ² All annual rates. ³ Q2 on Q2. ⁴ Excluding food, drink and tobacco.

levels in response to their difficult financial position. But the rate of destocking has eased, and this trend is forecast to continue in 1992. As a result, while stock levels may continue to all through much of 1992, stockbuilding is forecast to make a positive contribution to growth. Companies may begin to build up stocks from late 1992 to keep pace with rising sales and output. The change in stockbuilding could add 1 per cent to GDP growth in the year to the first half of 1993.

Companies

Industrial and commercial companies' profits (net of stock appreciation) are estimated to have fallen by 1½ per cent in 1991. But with a sharp fall in outlays, company saving rose a little. Together with the decline in capital expenditure this led to a halving of the financial deficit in 1991. Adjustment is forecast to continue in 1992, aided by a recovery in profits. By the first half of 1993, industrial and commercial companies could be close to financial balance.

Employment

Companies have reduced employment more quickly relative to output in this recession than in previous downturns. This no doubt reflects their determination to keep costs under control to maintain competitiveness, now that sterling is in the ERM. As a result, productivity has held up better this time than in previous post-war recessions. In the manufacturing sector, productivity rose by 2½ per

cent in the year to the fourth quarter of 1991. It is now close to its all-time high, even though output is 8 per cent below its peak in the second quarter of 1990. Productivity growth is expected to gather pace in 1992.

Latest data indicate that employment has fallen by 1 million from its record level in June 1990. It is likely to continue to fall for a while, though at a moderating pace. The upward trend in unemployment abated sharply in the course of 1991, much as expected. The trend monthly increase in unemployment levelled off around the turn of the year but is likely to moderate further in the months ahead as activity picks up.

Trade and balance of payments

The current account deficit in 1991 is estimated to have been £4½ billion, sharply down from the £15½ billion deficit recorded for 1990. The visible deficit nearly halved from £18½ billion in 1990 to £10 billion in 1991. Exports reached record levels during the year, and low domestic demand held imports down. The surplus on invisibles rose sharply to £5 billion in 1991 from £3 billion in 1990, thanks to Gulf receipts and unusually low net EC contributions.

Labour costs

Unit labour costs grew much faster in the UK than elsewhere during 1990, and cost

competitiveness continued to weaken in early 1991. Since then it has been improving. Price competitiveness deteriorated less than cost competitiveness in 1990 and had already started to improve by the end of the year as UK exporters cut their margins sharply.

Over the forecast period UK competitiveness is expected to improve, with manufacturing unit labour costs growing less quickly here than in the other main manufacturing countries. UK manufacturing unit labour cost growth has already fallen to under 4½ per cent from a peak of around 11 per cent. It is expected to slow further in 1992 and to fall in the first half of 1993, reflecting both the slowdown in earnings growth and the pick-up in productivity.

Producer prices

Producer output price inflation (excluding food, drink and tobacco) has continued to fall in recent months, to 2½ per cent in February — the lowest rate since 1969 — compared with 6½ per cent early last year. The annualised rate in the latest three months on the previous three months is now down to 2½ per cent. Although unit labour cost growth is well down on a year earlier, profit margins remain under pressure.

Retail price inflation has also fallen substantially, to 4 per cent in January compared with 9 per cent a year earlier. The all-items rate has fluctuated over the last few months as the effects of changes in mortgage rates and oil prices in late 1990 have dropped out of the calculation.

Excluding these, the underlying rate has continued to fall in response to weak consumer demand and smaller rises in food prices. But retail price inflation excluding mortgage interest payments remains at around 5½ per cent, somewhat above producer price inflation. This partly reflects the submergence of inflation in some services prices.

Pay settlements have fallen in response to falling inflation, weak labour market conditions and pressure on companies to maintain competitiveness. Provisional CBI data show settlements in manufacturing in the last quarter of 1991 averaging 4 per cent compared with 9 per cent a year earlier. Whole economy underlying earnings growth stood at 7½ per cent in December, compared

with a peak of 10½ per cent in July 1990. This is the first time since 1967 that underlying earnings growth has been below 7½ per cent.

Prospects

Earnings growth should continue to fall over the coming year as lower settlements feed through, although there may be some pick-up in wage drift as activity increases. A cyclical recovery in productivity should also help to restrain manufacturers' unit labour costs, which are forecast to fall as the recovery gathers pace. This underpins the forecast of further falls in producer price inflation, to 2 per cent in the fourth quarter of 1992 and 1½ per cent by the middle of 1993. There should still be scope for companies to rebuild profit margins as demand rises.

Underlying retail price inflation is also expected to fall through 1992 as producer price inflation continues to fall, and services prices increasingly respond to disinflationary pressures. Headline inflation may pick up in the coming months as the effects of last year's mortgage rate cuts and the 1991 Budget switch from the community charge to VAT drop out of the calculation. But RPI inflation is forecast to be down to 3½ per cent by the fourth quarter of 1992 and 3 per cent by the second quarter of 1993.

The expected progress on underlying inflation is also reflected in the forecast for the GDP deflator, which measures the price of domestic value added (principally unit labour costs and profits per unit of output). The GDP deflator is expected to rise by 7 per cent in 1991-2, of which the 1991 Budget VAT increase contributes about 1 per cent, but by only 4½ per cent in 1992-3.

Financial developments

Since the UK joined the ERM, the gap between UK interest rates and those in the low-inflation ERM countries has narrowed sharply as UK base rates have been cut to 10½ per cent from 15 per cent. The gap between base rates and official interest rates in Europe fell further in mid-December last year when all other ERM countries increased their official interest rates, and UK rates were unchanged.

Exchange rates

Following the December rise in other European interest rates, sterling fell, reaching its lowest value against the mark since ERM entry. But the government's firm public commitment to the existing ERM parities and the growing awareness in the foreign exchange markets of the improved prospects for UK inflation helped to ensure that the pressure was short-lived.

Long-term interest rates over the last year have been on a downward trend, consistent with market expectations of falling short-term rates and

inflation. The yield on 20-year gilts has fallen from 10½ per cent at the beginning of last year to little over 9 per cent on average in recent weeks.

Equity prices recovered sharply in early 1991, but showed little further growth in the remainder of the year. Equity prices have risen over the last couple of months, perhaps indicating improving expectations of economic growth.

Money and credit

The annual growth rate of M0 has remained comfortably within its 0-4 per cent target range for the first ten months of 1991-2. In the first half of the financial year M0 growth was a little below the mid-point of the range. In the second half it has been a little above the mid-point. M0 velocity growth has been consistent with its long-term trend.

The annual growth rate of M4 has continued the fall which started in early 1990. Then it was about 18 per cent; in January this year it was about 6 per cent. Bank and building society lending growth peaked at around 25 per cent at the end of 1988; since then it too has fallen to about 6 per cent. Recent figures suggest that the sharp declines in the growth rates of M4 and bank and building society lending may have come to an end. M4 velocity, which has been on a steep downward trend since the early 1980s, appears to have fallen only marginally over the last year.

Lower borrowing for house purchase has played a significant part in the slowdown of lending growth. But persons' other borrowing has remained subdued. The personal sector debt-income ratio, which rose steeply in the 1980s, partly reflecting financial liberalisation, seems now to have stabilised and may even be falling back.

Firms have also been cutting back on bank borrowing. Market conditions in 1991 have led them to prefer capital issues as a source of finance. Although M4 and M4 lending growth rates are at low levels as a result of the slowdown in activity, there is little evidence that the economic recovery in prospect will be inhibited by a shortage of bank or building society credit.

Forecast and outlook

Inflation in 1991 was much as forecast. Errors on the forecasts of demand, activity and the current account were within the average errors from past forecasts. GDP in 1991 fell by a little more than forecast. Partly as a result, the current account deficit was smaller than forecast. And the public sector borrowing requirement is likely to be well above last year's Budget forecast, though the error was no larger than the past average.

Government borrowing will leap to £28bn in 1992-3

The Chancellor predicted a doubling in the public sector borrowing requirement (PSBR) in the next financial year, to £28 billion. The increase reflected the delayed impact of weaker economic activity over the past year. The government was committed to budget balance over the medium term

There follow edited extracts from the Red Book report on the government's financial strategy.

Successful economic performance requires permanently low inflation and a healthy supply side. The defeat of inflation on a lasting basis is the central objective of the medium term financial strategy (MTFS). This macroeconomic framework is complemented by microeconomic policies designed to improve the flexibility and efficiency of markets, with a view to increasing the sustainable growth rate of the economy over the medium term.

Policy framework

The government is committed to membership of the exchange-rate mechanism (ERM) of the European Monetary System, and this provides the framework for monetary policy. Sterling is currently operating within broad (6 per cent) bands, but will in due course move to narrow (2½ per cent) bands at the current central parity of 2.95 marks.

Fiscal policy is set in a medium-term framework. The government's policy is to maintain a firm fiscal stance by balancing the budget over

the medium term. This approach ensures that fiscal policy supports monetary policy in achieving low inflation.

The UK signed the Maastricht Treaty on European Union on February 7, 1992. That treaty, which has not yet been ratified by Parliament, sets out the conditions for establishing economic and monetary union (EMU) in the European Community, including the adoption of a single monetary policy and in due course a single currency. The UK has reserved the right to choose whether or not to participate in the final stage of EMU, and in particular whether to move to the single monetary policy and single currency. But whatever choice is made, the government's policies are designed to ensure that the UK meets the convergence criteria laid down in the treaty.

ERM membership will remain the central discipline underpinning UK macroeconomic policy in the medium term. In principle, policy requirements are not fundamentally altered by ERM membership: they would be much the same even if the UK had chosen to pursue the objective of defeating inflation outside the ERM. But ERM membership now provides the medium-term nominal framework within which

the UK economy must operate.

The UK is an open economy, with few constraints on international trade in goods and services; and the completion of the single market will further reduce the remaining tariff and non-tariff barriers between the UK and our European Community partners. This freedom of trade, combined with the commitment to the ERM, means that the price of traded goods and services produced in the UK will largely be set in competitive international, and especially European, markets. UK costs and prices will not be able to move independently of those of our competitors for any length of time.

PSBR in 1992-3

Non-North Sea GDP in financial year 1992-3 is forecast up 1½ per cent on the previous year, below the sustainable growth rate of the economy. And the recession will still be affecting the public finances: in particular, social security expenditure and corporation tax receipts both lag behind the output cycle. For both these reasons the PSBR will rise in 1992-3; it has been set at £28 billion, equivalent to about 4½ per cent of GDP.

£ billion	'90-1	'91-2	'92-3	'93-4	'94-5	'95-6	'96-7
General govt expenditure	215.9	236	258	280	295	309	317
Govt receipts	216.5	222	230	247	270	290	312
Fiscal adjustment prev yrs	—	—	—	—	0	0	0
Annual fiscal adjustment	—	—	—	—	0	1	1
GGER	-0.5	14	29	32	25	19	7
Public corporations market and overseas borrowing	0.1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1
PSBR	-0.5	14	28	32	25	19	8
Money GDP	555.3	584	621	663	709	752	795
PSBR as % of money GDP	0	2½	4½	4½	3½	2½	1

¹ Rounded to the nearest £1 billion from 1991-2 onwards

% change on previous financial year	1991-2	1992-3	1993-4	1994-5	1995-6	1996-7
Money GDP	5	6½	6½	6½	6	5½
Real GDP:						
Non-North Sea	-2½	1½	3	3½	3½	3½
Total	-2	2	3½	3½	3½	3½
Inflation: GDP deflator	7	4½	3½	3	2½	2

¹ Forecasts for 1992-3 and assumptions thereafter. ² The 1991 Budget increase in VAT added about 1 percent to money GDP and the GDP deflator in 1991-2.

Economy in medium term

Assumptions about the path of the economy are required in order to illustrate the possible evolution of the public finances over the medium term.

The level of real GDP is now below trend, following the contraction of demand over the past two years. But in the medium term output is determined primarily by supply factors, and over the next few years there should be scope for more rapid growth accompanied by low inflation.

The projection assumes that

non-North Sea GDP grows by 3½ per cent per annum from 1994-5, above the likely trend rate of growth; and that inflation comes down to 2 per cent by 1996-7, close to the best performance in ERM countries. The output path implies that between 1990-1 and 1996-7, non-North Sea GDP grows on average by around 2 per cent a year, well within the potential growth rate of the economy.

Fiscal projections

The PSBR rises further as a share of GDP in 1993-4, to

4½ per cent, because of lower privatisation proceeds and the lagged effects of below trend growth in 1992-3. But thereafter it declines steadily towards balance in the medium term.

Public sector debt

The projected PSBR path implies some increase in the level of net public sector debt over the next few years. As the PSBR declines in response to faster output growth the ratio of net public sector debt to GDP will in due course resume a downward trend. The ratio is projected to peak at about 35 per cent of GDP in the mid-1990s, compared with an average of well over 45 per cent in the first half of the 1980s. Thus the prospective increase in the ratio only partially reverses the sharp fall in the late 1980s which was associated with the cyclical upturn and debt repayments.

Revenue

Within this broad, medium-term fiscal framework the government's policy is to cut taxes as and when this can be done on a sustainable basis and without prejudice to the government's objectives on inflation. The projections include fiscal adjustments of £1 billion in 1995-6 and 1996-7. But the precise size and timing of future tax reductions will depend on developments in the economy.

The revenue projections are based on the conventional

assumption of constant tax and national insurance rates from 1992-3, except where future changes have already been announced (for example, on contracted out rebates for national insurance contributions). Allowances, thresholds and specific duties are assumed to be indexed from their proposed 1992-3 levels. All proposed Budget changes are taken into account. The ratio of general government receipts to GDP falls further in 1992-3, largely reflecting the delayed impact on tax receipts of the fall in output in 1991-2. But as output recovers towards trend and delays in the payment of taxes work out, the ratio picks up over the medium term.

Public expenditure

The government's objective for public spending is that, over time, it should take a declining share of national income, while value for money is constantly improved. This is consistent with policy on the overall level of taxation within the framework of maintaining a balanced budget over the medium term. The public spending objective is expressed in terms of the ratio of general government expenditure (GGE), excluding privatisation proceeds, to GDP. An underlying downward trend in this ratio was established in the early 1980s. Strong economic growth in the later 1980s led to sharp falls in the ratio. Cyclical influences are now exerting upward pressure on

public spending, notably on social security, leading to some rise in the ratio. It should resume its downward trend as the economy recovers. In 1991-2 the ratio is expected to be 42 per cent of GDP, 2½ percentage points above its 1988-9 level, but still 5½ percentage points below the level seen in 1982-3 following the early-1980s recession.

The projections of general government expenditure include the cash planning totals published in the 1991 autumn statement for the period to 1994-5. The projections for local authorities' self-financed expenditure take account of latest information on local authorities' spending in 1991-2 and budgets for 1992-3; and the projections of gross debt interest payments and accounting adjustments are consistent with other economic assumptions. For 1995-6 and 1996-7 it is provisionally assumed that the growth of real GGE will slow as cyclical effects continue to unwind; expenditure plans will be settled in future surveys.

Summary

The MTFS reaffirms the government's commitment to bringing inflation down on a sustainable basis within the ERM, and achieving convergence within the European Community. The government continues to operate fiscal policy consistently with the objective of medium term budget balance. This will provide full support for the government's commitment to the ERM.

THE TIMES WEDNESDAY MARCH 11 1992

[illegible]

Portfolio
PLATINUM

From your Portfolio Platinum card, check your daily share price movements on this page only. Add them up to give you your total return and check the return on the daily dividend figure. If it matches you have won tonight or a share of the daily prize money. If you have not, follow the claim procedure on the back of your card. Always have your card available when claiming. Game rules appear on the back of your card.

No	Company	Group	Share or Unit
1	Shell Chem	Shell/Disc	
2	Papillon Int	Paper/Print	
3	Marley	Building/Mat	
4	Lawrence (W)	Building/Mat	
5	Dela	Electrical	
6	Combridge	Building/Mat	
7	North West	Water	
8	Bank Scotland	Bank/Disc	
9	Clarke Foods	Food	
10	HSBC	Bank/Disc	
11	Blackley Mtr	Motor/Air	
12	Lockridge	Industrial	
13	Raise Int	Building/Mat	
14	Wobley	Industrial	
15	Anglo Pl	Dispersive	
16	Compass (Group)	Dispersive	
17	Alm Food	Food	
18	Green Trust	Water	
19	De Paulson	Oil/Gas	
20	Unigate	Food	
21	Anglo TV	Leisure	
22	Westwood	Paper/Print	
23	Lloyds Chem	Dispersive	
24	Or Portland	Property	
25	Preston	Dispersive	
26	Ryl St Str	Bank/Disc	
27	Applegate	Motor/Air	
28	Rolls Royce	Motor/Air	
29	Wells Water	Water	
30	Indes (W)	Motor/Air	
31	Marley Group	Dispersive	
32	Marley Group	Dispersive	
33	Indes (W)	Motor/Air	
34	Johnson Smith	Industrial	
35	Blue Circle	Building/Mat	
36	Nat West	Bank/Disc	
37	BM Co	Industrial	
38	Williams Hdg	Industrial	
39	THORN EMI	Electrical	
40	Ud Shells	Food	
41	Polyprop	Industrial	
42	BT	Industrial	
43	Tenneco	Industrial	
44	Kingsfisher	Dispersive	

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Please take into account any minor signs

Weekly Dividend

Please make a note of your daily gain for the weekly dividend of £6,000 in Saturday's newspaper.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

There were no valid claims for the Portfolio Prize yesterday. The £6,000 will be added to today's competition.

1991/92 High Low Company Price % Chg % Yld

BANKS, DISCOUNT, HP

Company	Price	% Chg	% Yld
100	100.00	0.00	0.00
101	101.00	0.00	0.00
102	102.00	0.00	0.00
103	103.00	0.00	0.00
104	104.00	0.00	0.00
105	105.00	0.00	0.00
106	106.00	0.00	0.00
107	107.00	0.00	0.00
108	108.00	0.00	0.00
109	109.00	0.00	0.00
110	110.00	0.00	0.00
111	111.00	0.00	0.00
112	112.00	0.00	0.00
113	113.00	0.00	0.00
114	114.00	0.00	0.00
115	115.00	0.00	0.00
116	116.00	0.00	0.00
117	117.00	0.00	0.00
118	118.00	0.00	0.00
119	119.00	0.00	0.00
120	120.00	0.00	0.00
121	121.00	0.00	0.00
122	122.00	0.00	0.00
123	123.00	0.00	0.00
124	124.00	0.00	0.00
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126	126.00	0.00	0.00
127	127.00	0.00	0.00
128	128.00	0.00	0.00
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199	199.00	0.00	0.00
200	200.00	0.00	0.00

BREWERIES

Company	Price	% Chg	% Yld
100	100.00	0.00	0.00
101	101.00	0.00	0.00
102	102.00	0.00	0.00
103	103.00	0.00	0.00
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BUILDING, ROADS

40	Albany	63	-1						
10	Albany	63							
142	26	142							
130	131	141							
195	Amesbury	149							
260	Andover	149	+1						
245	Andover	149							
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survives to claim title

Remittance Man poised to take two-mile crown

THE Queen Mother Champion Chase should be a marvellous spectacle at Cheltenham today now that Remittance Man and Waterloo Boy have both stood their ground alongside last year's winner Katabatic.

By deciding to run Remittance Man in today's grade one race over two miles instead of the Cathcart Challenge Cup over an extra half-mile tomorrow, Nicky Henderson has certainly not taken the soft option.

I hope to see his judgement vindicated and the colic made famous by the late Lord Bicester's good chasers again carried to victory at this moment of jumping.

It has long been my contention that a top-class chaser over two-and-a-half miles is an ideal candidate for the two-mile championship at Cheltenham where the distance takes so much getting.

One only has to recall the feats of Royal Relief and Barnbrook Again to get the message.

Two years ago, Barnbrook Again outlasted Waterloo Boy in that memorable struggle up the final hill.

When Katabatic beat Waterloo Boy by seven lengths on the corresponding occasion last year, Waterloo Boy was not at his peak following an interrupted preparation.

He is at his best now, though, following successive victories at Sandown, Wetherby, Ascot and Newbury which have seen him emerge as a specialist over today's distance.

In contrast, Remittance Man has been campaigned over further this season, winning twice over two-and-a-half miles at Newbury since failing to stay the three miles of the King George VI Chase at Kempton.

Anyone who watched Re-

becca, who had previously accounted for the unbeaten Travado.

Milnechoma, Mutare and Springaleak are my three alternatives for the Sun Alliance Chase.

Over hurdles Milnechoma was up to beating Remittance Man. And when he also brought about the first defeat over fences of Mutare at Cheltenham in January, subsequent winners Danny Harrod and Ask Frank were a long way behind in third and fourth place.

While Mutare has a chance of taking his revenge now on 3lb better terms for three-and-a-half lengths, I still expect to see the latter give Martin Pipe and Peter Scudamore their second consecutive success in the race, having won it 12 months ago with Rolling Ball.

Springaleak, who is undefeated in five races over fences this season, looks a sporting bet to be placed since Cheltenham looks tailor-made for his rugged on the way that the counter-attacked when beating Quercus at Warwick.

While my Irish contact tells me High Peak and Bishop's Staff should both go well in the National Hunt Chase for amateur riders, I do not intend to look further than the Tim Thomson Jones-trained Keep Talking.

The seven-year-old impressed when winning at Kempton last time and will be ridden by the experienced Marcus Armytage.

With Trapper John declared for the Coral Golden Hurdle final, 18 of the runners will not compete with their correct weight. Not so The Widest Man, who is expected to relish this trip after finishing a close second over two-and-a-half miles at Kempton last time.

MANDARIN	THUNDERER	RICHARD EVANS
2.15 Theford Forest	2.15 Mure	2.15 THEFTORF FOREST (nap)
2.30 REMITTANCE MAN (nap)	2.30 REMITTANCE MAN (nap)	2.30 Waterloo Boy
3.30 The Widest Man	3.30 The Widest Man	3.30 Better Times Ahead
4.05 Milnechoma	4.05 General Idea	4.05 Paxson's Thomas
4.40 Keep Talking	4.40 The Forde	4.40 Keep Talking
5.15 King Of The Lot	5.15 Farnham Boy	5.15 Ardair

The Times Private Handicapper's top rating: 3.30 HOLY JOE.

GOING: GOOD SIS

2.15 SUN ALLIANCE NOVICES HURDLE

(Grade 1: £34, 152: 2m 40g (30 runners))																
101	14-421	ASHFOLD COPEE 33	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	14-421	ASHFOLD COPEE 33	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
102	121	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	121	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
103	122	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	122	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
104	123	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	123	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
105	124	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	124	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
106	125	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	125	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
107	126	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	126	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
108	127	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	127	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
109	128	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	128	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
110	129	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	129	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
111	130	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	130	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
112	131	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	131	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
113	132	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	132	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
114	133	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	133	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
115	134	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	134	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
116	135	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	135	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
117	136	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	136	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
118	137	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	137	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
119	138	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	138	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
120	139	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	139	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
121	140	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	140	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
122	141	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	141	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
123	142	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	142	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
124	143	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	143	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
125	144	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	144	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
126	145	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	145	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
127	146	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	146	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
128	147	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	147	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
129	148	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	148	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
130	149	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	149	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
131	150	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	150	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
132	151	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	151	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
133	152	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	152	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
134	153	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	153	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
135	154	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	154	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
136	155	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	155	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
137	156	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	156	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
138	157	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	157	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
139	158	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	158	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
140	159	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	159	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
141	160	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	160	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
142	161	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	161	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
143	162	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	162	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
144	163	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	163	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
145	164	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	164	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
146	165	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	165	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
147	166	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	166	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
148	167	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	167	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
149	168	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	168	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
150	169	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	169	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
151	170	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	170	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
152	171	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	171	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
153	172	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	172	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
154	173	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	173	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
155	174	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	174	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
156	175	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	175	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
157	176	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	176	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
158	177	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	177	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
159	178	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	178	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
160	179	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	179	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
161	180	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	180	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
162	181	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	181	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
163	182	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	182	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
164	183	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	183	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
165	184	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	184	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
166	185	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	185	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
167	186	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	186	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
168	187	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	187	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
169	188	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	188	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
170	189	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	189	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
171	190	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	190	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
172	191	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	191	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
173	192	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	192	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
174	193	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	193	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
175	194	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	194	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
176	195	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	195	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
177	196	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71	196	BARTON BANK 35	(D.F.)	(M. P. L.)	G. H. Wood	5-11-7	M. P. L.	71
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South Africa relish meeting their oldest allies



Kirsten confident

FROM ALAN LEE
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT
IN MELBOURNE

HISTORY is in the making every time South Africa's cricketers step on to the field in the World Cup. Soon, the unimaginable will seem commonplace — unless, that is, the unthinkable happens next Tuesday and a negative referendum vote plunges South Africa back into the wilderness of sport. It is a prospect that rests heavily with every member of the South African party, a fear that their first important cricketing event will also be their last. For this reason, above all others, each game they play is precious to them, few more strikingly so than the day-

night fixture with England tomorrow.

For better or worse, England have been South Africa's closest and most loyal cricketing allies. Of the 172 Test matches played by South Africa before isolation, 102 were against England. The D'Oliveira affair of 1968 and the cancelled tour of two years later created solid barriers between the countries, but hardly a year has passed without someone within English cricket wanting to knock them down.

Now that it has happened, in the only acceptable fashion, the English game has cheered louder than any. If England have not yet joined the almost unseemly queue beating at South Africa's

door, lingering political scruples buried by the lure of the rand, there will still be a sense of restored tradition about tomorrow's game, even if it will be appreciated more by some of the VIP spectators than by the players themselves.

Nothing demonstrates the lost years more graphically than that six of South Africa's likely eleven tomorrow when their country last played England in 1965.

That series, its poignancy apart, is chiefly remembered for Graeme Pollock's thunderous century at Trent Bridge. But the South African captain that year was Peter van der Merwe and his influence remains. It was he, in his present guise as chair-

man of selectors, who launched this World Cup campaign in sensational style by discarding Rice, Cook and, initially, Kirsten.

Cook is at home with his thoughts, but Rice is making little effort to disguise his, in between commentary stints for Channel 9. As for Kirsten, his reprieve, apparently secured by the persistence of the new captain, Wessels, has been so emphatically vindicated that the original thinking looks ever more misguided.

Kirsten was the leading scorer in the tournament at its midway point and, having missed the victory over Pakistan on Sunday with a calf strain, he returned to help dispose of Zimbabwe yesterday. South Africa have

now won three games in succession and victory tomorrow would make them semi-finalists. Without Kirsten, such a prize would have been beyond them.

It may yet elude them, for the pack is snapping at their heels and their inexperience of such pressures could be crippling. But other batsmen have begun to feed off Kirsten's confidence and, if they can at last add 30 extra runs to their too modest par of 200, England will not win this one at cruising speed.

South Africa have been winning on the unexpected quality of their bowling. Donald we knew about, but Snell, McMillan and Pringle have surprised. They have not, however, been uniformly disciplined and Wessels

admits to alarm that they may self-destruct if they continue to bowl so many extra balls. In their last two games alone, they have bowled no fewer than 30 wides.

"As soon as it swings, we have a problem," Wessels said. "The white ball seems to swing much more in Australia than in New Zealand and this is something we must work out because it is just unacceptable to give away so much."

No team has fielded better than England, but South Africa run them close. Not the least appetising aspect of tomorrow's game will be the spectacle of Lewis, Fairbrother and Hick on one side, Rhodes and Cronje on the other. England are near enough

to a semi-final place to take no chances on their wounded, and the team manager, Micky Stewart, made it plain yesterday that Lamb and Gooch are most unlikely to be considered.

"It is out of the question for Graham," he said, "and to my mind, there is no way Lamb can play either. He thinks he can recover from a broken leg in 24 hours, but we know different."

Lamb did have a gentle net against some slow bowlers yesterday and is understandably keen to play against his native country. It will, however, be left to Smith and Hick to experience the mixed emotions of opposing a team of which, in other circumstances, they would have been a part.

India indulge in a form of self-destruction

West Indies make heavy weather of five-wicket win

FROM JOHN WOODCOCK
IN WELLINGTON

WEST Indies beat India deservedly in the World Cup here yesterday, but there were times when it seemed unlikely that they would. They won eventually by five wickets after bowling India out for 197, a good many fewer than seemed likely halfway through the Indian innings.

Had West Indies lost, they could not have finished with more than eight points from their qualifying matches, and it is beginning to look as though that will be too few for a place in the semi-finals. Their showdown with Australia in Melbourne on Wednesday next week could now be crucial for both sides.

India, for their part, have left themselves needing to win their last two matches, against New Zealand and South Africa, if they are to have any chance of preventing their compatriots at home from contemplating the end of the world. This, for most of them, is what failing to reach the last four of the World Cup would amount to.

As is so easily done, but which England, significantly, are not doing at the moment, India kept over-reaching themselves when they were batting well. It is a form of self-destruction. This is sad, because they are potentially the most attractive batting side in the competition. West Indies looked like doing the same when they plummeted from 50 for no wicket after six blazing overs to 112 for five;

WEST INDIES
A. J. Doolittle c Benjamin b Simmons 27
K. Sridharan c Lyle b Hooper 40
M. Azharuddin c Ambrose b Curran 61
S. R. Tendulkar c Williams b Ambrose 4
S. V. Manjrekar run out 27
K. S. Duleep Singh c Curran 1
P. K. Amre c Hooper b Ambrose 1
N. S. More c Hooper b Curran 1
M. Prabhakar c Richardson b Curran 1
J. Srinath not out 1
S. V. Raju not out 1
Extras (b 6, w 5, nb 1) 12
Total (48.4 overs) 197
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-58, 2-102, 3-115, 4-182, 5-171, 6-173, 7-182, 8-182, 9-182, 10-182, 11-182, 12-182, 13-182, 14-182, 15-182, 16-182, 17-182, 18-182, 19-182, 20-182, 21-182, 22-182, 23-182, 24-182, 25-182, 26-182, 27-182, 28-182, 29-182, 30-182, 31-182, 32-182, 33-182, 34-182, 35-182, 36-182, 37-182, 38-182, 39-182, 40-182, 41-182, 42-182, 43-182, 44-182, 45-182, 46-182, 47-182, 48-182, 49-182, 50-182, 51-182, 52-182, 53-182, 54-182, 55-182, 56-182, 57-182, 58-182, 59-182, 60-182, 61-182, 62-182, 63-182, 64-182, 65-182, 66-182, 67-182, 68-182, 69-182, 70-182, 71-182, 72-182, 73-182, 74-182, 75-182, 76-182, 77-182, 78-182, 79-182, 80-182, 81-182, 82-182, 83-182, 84-182, 85-182, 86-182, 87-182, 88-182, 89-182, 90-182, 91-182, 92-182, 93-182, 94-182, 95-182, 96-182, 97-182, 98-182, 99-182, 100-182, 101-182, 102-182, 103-182, 104-182, 105-182, 106-182, 107-182, 108-182, 109-182, 110-182, 111-182, 112-182, 113-182, 114-182, 115-182, 116-182, 117-182, 118-182, 119-182, 120-182, 121-182, 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WEDNESDAY MARCH 11 1992

Selhurst Park is FA's choice for Europe



Kirtin: making bid

By STUART JONES
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

SELHURST Park will be one of the eight venues should the finals of the European football championship be staged in England in 1996. The home of Crystal Palace has been included in the Football Association's revised bid to be submitted in Gothenburg today.

In the conviction that the tournament will feature 16 finalists, twice as many as in the field in Sweden this summer, the FA has rewritten its own document and doubled the number of grounds to be used. The pro-

posal maintains the geographical spread across the country.

Selhurst Park, the capital's representative with Wembley, was thus preferred to Highbury and White Hart Lane, which might have been considered more natural choices, because it is in south London. It is more convenient for those travelling from the coast or through the Channel Tunnel.

Stamford Bridge was rejected because of the continuing doubts over its future and Twickenham was regarded as too expensive and too big an alternative. To

widen the pitch and to improve the quality of the surface of the headquarters of rugby union would cost up to £1 million.

The capacity, 70,000, was thought to be excessive for games that would be overshadowed by England's appearances at Wembley. Selhurst Park, when it is fully refurbished, will be capable of accommodating 30,000 seated spectators, the minimum requirement laid down by Uefa, Europe's governing body.

The other sites are Villa Park and Nottingham Forest's City Ground in the Midlands, Old Trafford and

Goodison Park in the north-west, and Elland Road with another venue yet to be specified in the north-east. There are five possibilities still being studied by the FA.

Hillsborough is the clear favourite. Bramall Lane, across the city of Sheffield, Sunderland's Roker Park and Newcastle United's St James' Park are contenders. It is conceivable, albeit highly improbable, that the vote could go to Huddersfield Town, though not in their present location at Leeds Road.

The third division club is to move into a new arena to be shared with its rugby

league counterparts. The admission of Huddersfield is surprising and would seem to be a gesture of recognition and encouragement to smaller clubs devising realistic plans for the future.

Wembley and Old Trafford would house both the quarter-finals — with Villa Park and Elland Road — and the semi-finals. It is unlikely that Manchester's new Olympic stadium, even if the city is selected to act as the hosts of the Games in 2000, will be put forward as a possible alternative in the north.

Accompanied by Sir Bert Millichip, the chairman of

the FA, Glen Kirtin, the project director, flew to Sweden yesterday. "We believe that England has the facilities to stage the competition, whatever the size," he said, "and we would be willing to accept any basis on which Uefa is prepared to offer it."

The championship could be staged in two countries, especially if it is to embrace 16 competing nations. Yet Uefa would probably prefer it to establish the enlarged event in one centre and England is expected to be awarded the honour when the decision is announced on May 5.

The Netherlands and Austria are the other realistic contenders and their facilities, though more complete than those in Greece and Portugal, are thought to be limited. The evidence is about to be considered by Uefa's European championship committee, which will submit a recommendation to the executive committee tomorrow.

A clear indication of the governing body's intentions will then be apparent but the official verdict will not be delivered until the eve of the European Cup Winners' Cup final, which will be in Lisbon, Munich or Paris.

United will miss Hughes in Rumbelows Cup replay

Ripley holds the key for Middlesbrough

By LOUISE TAYLOR

THE most likely route Middlesbrough to reach Wembley in tonight's Rumbelows Cup semi-final second leg at Manchester United probably lies at the feet of Stuart Ripley.

A powerful and pacy forward — easily identified by his blonde hair — Ripley usually plays on the wing. Yet Bruce Rioch, the former Middlesbrough manager, yesterday suggested he could pose problems in a central role at Old Trafford, where the score starts goalless after last week's draw at Ayresome Park.

"If you told Gary Pallister he was marking Ripley, I don't think he would be too happy," Rioch said. An England defender, Pallister, of course, made his name when playing in central defence for Middlesbrough where he was a close friend of Bernie Slaven — a goal-poacher described by Rioch, now in charge of Millwall, as a "big occasion player".

Middlesbrough are thus two matches away from winning their first big honour, the only problem being that they are against United and, possibly, Nottingham Forest in the final at Wembley.

Lennie Lawrence's second division side arguably spurred their best opportunity of reaching the national stadium by failing to score in the goalless first leg on Teesside. Yet although Middlesbrough missed their chances, Manchester United had a few of their own repelled by Stephen Pears, the Middlesbrough goalkeeper, who began his career with United.

Lawrence regards Pears as "the best goalkeeper in the second division" and the goalkeeper's performance on the Old Trafford ground where he failed to make the grade as a youngster could certainly prove decisive.

Rioch believes Middlesbrough will draw strength from the nucleus of tonight's team that are local Teessiders who contributed to the club's

rise from the third division to the first before falling back to the second. Along the way, the club has been involved in a number of epic cup struggles, and Rioch said: "I don't think they will freeze. I'm sure they won't. I know those Middlesbrough players and they will not lay down and die. The fact that a lot of them are local lads will help in that respect."

"Obviously, Manchester United have the experience and the internationals, but the fact that Mark Hughes is not available for United will help Middlesbrough. I think they can win. For a club of their size, it is about time Middlesbrough won something."

On paper, United look much stronger in the midfield, but, in Jamie Pollock, brought to the club by Rioch as an apprentice, Middlesbrough boast a precociously strong, and apparently fearless 17-year-old who should not be daunted by Old Trafford.

At the back, Gary Parkin-

son is unlikely to pass a fitness test, so Curtis Fleming, signed from St Patrick's FA of Dublin for £50,000 last summer, is poised to deputise.

Willie Falconer is likely to end sixth months' injury-enforced absence by sitting on the Middlesbrough substitutes' bench, while Steve Bruce is expected to return to the United defence six weeks after undergoing a hernia operation.

With Hughes absent, Lee Sharpe returns to the left side of the United attack.

Three matches are to be screened live simultaneously next Wednesday for the first time on British television. The BBC is showing Liverpool's Uefa Cup quarter-final second leg against Genoa, which kicks off at 7.10pm. ITV is screening Tottenham Hotspur's European Cup Winners' Cup second leg against Feyenoord at 7.45pm and Sky Sports shows Sunderland's FA Cup sixth round replay against Chelsea, also at 7.45pm.



Flying home: Royal Gait, ridden by Graham McCourt, right, clears the last with Hywel Davies on Fildway on his way to a controversial win in the Champion Hurdle at Cheltenham yesterday. Report, 34

Budget betting change is £15m windfall for sport

By JOHN GOODBODY

SPORT should receive a £15 million windfall as a result of the Chancellor's announcement yesterday of a cut in betting duty.

Norman Lamont said the government would reduce the tax from 8 per cent to 7.75 per cent, so releasing about £15 million a year. He emphasised that the bookmakers should have regard to greyhound racing and sports other than horse racing in distributing the new money. He said that the home secretary, Kenneth Baker, would be making proposals to ensure that the greater part of this reduction would be channelled to the horse racing

industry. He added: "That is an important part of this measure. I shall review the cut in betting duty next year. A proportion of the reduction, of course, will be attributable to betting on greyhound racing."

Baker later announced that the 1992-3 betting levy scheme — the bookmakers' payment to the horse racing industry — would be about £49 million, assuming turnover of £4,300 million.

The Bookmakers' Committee welcomed the reduction in betting duty and said in a statement: "The rates and allowances to produce the yield required for the implications on the small and large book-

maker can be assessed. "I hope that voluntary arrangements can be found to direct some of this money to help the greyhound racing industry, and Mr Baker will be exploring the possibilities with interested parties."

Greyhound racing, along with football, cricket, tennis, golf, boxing and other sports on which there is betting but no return from the bookmakers, has been lobbying for a share of the betting duty which at present goes only to horse racing. Greyhound racing claims that it is deprived of £11 million, and other sports claim £6 million between them.

Archie Newhouse, chief executive of the National Grey-

hound Racing Club, said: "We are delighted with the news and clearly there must now be something coming back to our sport. All we have ever asked for is fair play and we hope that the bookmakers take this on board. The government has clearly seen that there is a disparity between horse racing and all other betting sports."

Peter Lawson, secretary of the Central Council of Physical Recreation, which represents the governing bodies of British sport, said: "The government has put a very positive foot in the door of the bookmakers and we hope that after the general election they will apply a firm shoulder."

Kitson in £1.3m move to Derby

DERBY County yesterday broke their transfer record when they signed Paul Kitson, the England Under-21 forward, in a £1.3 million deal with Leicester City (Louise Taylor writes).

The second division club paid £800,000 for Kitson, with Phil Gee and Ian Ormondroyd moving to Filbert Street in part exchange.

The package betters the £1.2 million Arthur Cox, the Derby manager, paid Crystal Palace for Marco Gabbiadini earlier this year. Kitson, aged 21, normally a winger, has scored ten goals for Leicester this season, and Cox said: "He has all the qualities to

develop into an outstanding player."

Vinny Samways was yesterday placed on the transfer list by Tottenham Hotspur. Samways, aged 23, who is from nearby Bethnal Green, joined Tottenham from school.

Oddham Athletic have had an offer for Steve Redmond, the Manchester City defender, rejected. Liverpool have awarded Rob Jones, their England full back, a new, improved five-year contract. Andreas Scholl, the German midfielder player, yesterday joined the third division club, Torquay United, on a non-contract basis from Nuremberg.

Leeds hope to extend lead

By LOUISE TAYLOR

ON A night when Manchester United continue to flirt with cup glory, Leeds United will concentrate on the championship. By winning at Queen's Park Rangers this evening, they can extend their lead over their Manchester rivals at the head of the first division to five points.

Rangers, however, have a healthy disrespect for such pretensions. They were the team who trounced United at Old Trafford on New Year's day before crushing Manchester City's outside championship hopes last Saturday.

In between, they have tended to draw matches. With Sheridan and Whitlow, their full backs, recovering from knee and groin injuries, Leeds are expected to be unchanged at Loftus Road. Cantona, the French international forward, is again a substitute.

Ludek Mikosko is fit and expected to return in goal for West Ham United's visit to Liverpool tonight after missing seven games with a calf injury. But Billy Bonds's team are still without Tim

Breacker, their right back, who has a hamstring strain.

West Ham are bottom of the first division and Bonds said: "I never won at Anfield in 25 years as a player, so now would be a great time to get a result there. We desperately need it." Liverpool, in contrast, have their attention focussed on largely on cup competitions, and their belief that they are still capable of reaching the semi-finals of this season's Uefa Cup was strengthened yesterday with the news that Ian Rush has made a swifter than anticipated recovery from injury.

Rush will play in a reserve-team fixture against Coventry City tomorrow night just two weeks after undergoing surgery on a damaged right knee and, if he suffers no adverse reaction, he could line up in next week's quarter-final second leg against Genoa, when Liverpool will seek to overturn a two-goal first-leg deficit.

Tottenham Hotspur need to win at Luton Town, themselves fourth from bottom of the table, this evening in order to avoid being sucked into a relegation struggle.

A summer of content before the big decisions

ENGLISH rugby will not know for at least six months just how large a rebuilding job will be required within the national side. At the end of an exhausting 18 months of almost non-stop rugby, most of the squad want to have a complete summer off and then see how we feel next September.

We have played ten high-powered internationals in five months, a level of intensity that has been amazing.

Much has been said about likely retirements, but I would welcome some of the older hands staying on a little longer. If we could get through next season having introduced just two newcomers rather than four, I believe the continuing health and success of English rugby would be assured.

By the end of next season, players who have joined recently, such as Jason Leonard and especially Martin Bayfield, should be experienced performers. The rapid progress both have made has been marvellous. Leonard is now established, Bayfield could be by the end of next season. That is where one more year from some of the senior guys could be so valuable.

I see young players such as Tim Rodber, Ben Clarke and Neil Back challenging hard for places in the back row who should be fit again next season. But if we were to lose the whole back row from this year, it would be tough for newcomers because there would be nobody of great experience alongside to help



Rob Andrew, the England stand-off, considers what lies ahead after the team's second grand slam triumph

them integrate into the side. One who has had a profound influence has been Dewi Morris. We had become a bit stereotyped as a side: Richard Hill or I was kicking or he was passing to me and I was passing it on down the line.

But one of Dewi's natural talents is his ability to link with his back row. His weakness had been his pass, but he has worked hard on that and has returned to give us another option.

Two players in particular

epitomised the spirit that has been a key factor: Dewi is one, for he had to suffer the disappointment of watching every World Cup match from the bench. But he got his reward in the five nations' championship.

Dean Richards is the other. He was dropped for the three biggest games of the cup: the quarter-final, semi-final and final. Then, when Mike Teague was not available, an untrapped youngster was brought in before him, yet Deano just soldiered on,

turning up for training sessions and encouraging Tim Rodber. Then he was recalled and again played superbly. Any winning side needs that attitude.

There are two aspects I intend largely to ignore. One is comparisons between this England side and previous ones because the game is so different from even five years ago that comparisons are pointless. The second is the suggestion that England might have met Australia in a special match. I was glad the RFU said it was a non-starter because it was a daft flyer of an idea.

Last Saturday lunchtime the BBC showed about 15 minutes of the Australian, David Campese, rubbing his England and the game in the northern hemisphere. Seven-

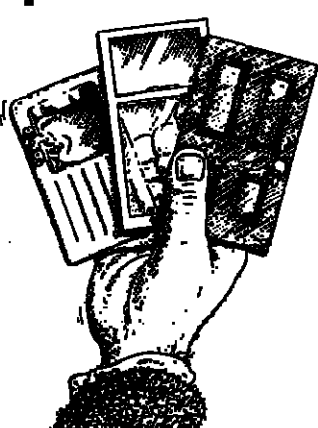
al players felt very disappointed that so negative a tape should be given an airing just before a grand slam game that millions of people were going to watch, some of them potential new followers.

ITV did a fantastic job promoting rugby during the World Cup because it was were so positive in what it presented. To us, this BBC film of Campese was just negative and we found it a shame that the game over here should be shown in such a poor light by an Australian of whom we are sick of hearing about.

Interview by Peter Bills.

France stay firm, page 34

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LIFE & TIMES

WEDNESDAY MARCH 11 1992



WOMEN
Claire Rayner
breaks the last
taboo in
advertising

Misha's back and smelling like roses

Mikhail Baryshnikov, prince of classical ballet, started a European tour this week with his thoroughly modern White Oak Dance Project. Debra Craine found a man at ease in his new clothes

On he saunters, a diminutive, unprepossessing figure in a red and gold brocade jacket, a slightly ridiculous man wielding what looks like a plastic sausage. For the next 20 minutes he is at the heart of a giddy blend of silent screen slapstick and children's cartoon antics. He is Punch, the villainous hero of a new David Gordon dancework based on the old Punch and Judy shows. He is also Mikhail Baryshnikov, Russian ballet star extraordinaire.

If this incarnation of the man once acclaimed as the world's greatest male classical dancer is incongruous to some, there is no incongruity in the mind of the star himself. Turning his back — at least temporarily — on the behemoths of ballet, Broadway and Hollywood, Baryshnikov is now establishing his credentials as a humble modern dancer.

Gone are the slippers, the tights and the princely apparel that clothed the Siegfrieds and Albrechts of Baryshnikov's youth; gone, too, are the double tours en l'air and big jumps that thrilled audiences in the 1970s. In their place is the White Oak Dance Project, which Baryshnikov and the American choreographer Mark Morris started almost two years ago as "a group of dancers who wanted to work together and do the choreography of people we admire".

Those people include Paul Taylor, Martha Graham, Lar Lubovitch, David Gordon and Morris himself, the mainstream of American modern dance. Next month White Oak brings their work to London, the final stop on the company's first European tour. And "Misha", for that is how everyone in America knows Baryshnikov, will probably be dancing every night, his first appearances in London since 1985.

Cynics would say that, at the age of 44, Baryshnikov has turned to modern dance as a means of extending the professional life of a played-out prince unkind tongues in America dubbed White Oak "The Geritol Tour", a snide reference to the tonic sold to bolster America's elderly population, and to the fact that the average age of White Oak's dancers is over 35.

Certainly Baryshnikov is not the only Russian ballet defector refusing to bow to the exigencies of time: Rudolf Nureyev, now over 50, continues to perform beyond his sell-by date as a classical dancer, while Natalia Makarova, her days as a ballerina behind her, has recently started to walk the boards as a 50-plus actress.

"Anyone who says I do modern dance because I can't do ballet doesn't know how difficult what we are doing is," says

Baryshnikov, looking whacked after a run-through of *Punch and Judy* in David Gordon's downtown Manhattan studios. "There are a lot of classical roles I danced which are much easier than this. Just because in modern dance there are no double tours doesn't mean it's not difficult."

Whatever the cynics might say, Baryshnikov's conversion to modern dance is genuine. Indeed, no other classical dancer in the world has enjoyed the kind of crossover experience he has had. Within two years of breaking away from his KGB minders during a Kirov Ballet tour to Canada in 1974, the acclaimed classicist was working with the iconoclastic Twyla Tharp. The cheeky result, *Push Comes to*

twice as much as in even the big classical pieces like *Swan Lake* and *Sleeping Beauty*, where you do the pas de deux, you do the coda, and bye bye.

"There's always some lady who wants to see me in ballet slippers, tights and a beautiful jacket with a lot of embroidery because she remembers me in *Corsaire* or *Giselle*, but you can't counter this. It's their problem if they come to see something classical."

In his missionary zeal to make White Oak accessible for a wider audience, Baryshnikov insisted that the original ticket prices for next month's Sadler's Wells season be lowered: the top ticket price is now £35. "We don't have big production values for sets or a huge orchestra, and we are a small group. I think that should be balanced against the ticket prices. I want people to feel they can afford the tickets. When somebody is paying \$120 for a ticket to see opera or dance, even before the curtain goes up they start wondering whether it is worth it."

These days, Baryshnikov calls the shots because he pays the bills. White Oak is his company, paid for out of his personal fortune. It means he dances what he wants, with whom he wants and when he wants. "I did not want to deal with sponsors, I did not want to have a board of directors. This is my money and I do with my money what I want. I don't have to answer to anyone."

Such independence must seem especially sweet after his experiences at American Ballet Theatre, where a decade of managing egos and manipulating the hierarchy wore him down. In 1989 he quit as artistic director amid claims of mismanagement: the company was facing massive financial problems, while his new-look repertoire had alienated some of ABT's traditional audience.

Still, there were some real achievements: Baryshnikov improved the company's standards of performance, broadened its artistic outlook and developed talent from within the ranks, rather than relying on foreign guest stars to boost the box office.

"I'm proud of what I did at ABT," he says. "I'm just sad that the thing ended in crisis. I wish I could have stepped out cleanly; unfortunately it ended in scandal. It was unpleasant but I am trying to forget that now."

Today Baryshnikov enjoys the patronage of a former ABT board member, Howard Gilman. The American philanthropist has built luxurious rehearsal facilities for the company on his Florida plantation — White Oak — a 7,500-acre wildlife preserve which is home to more than 600 ani-

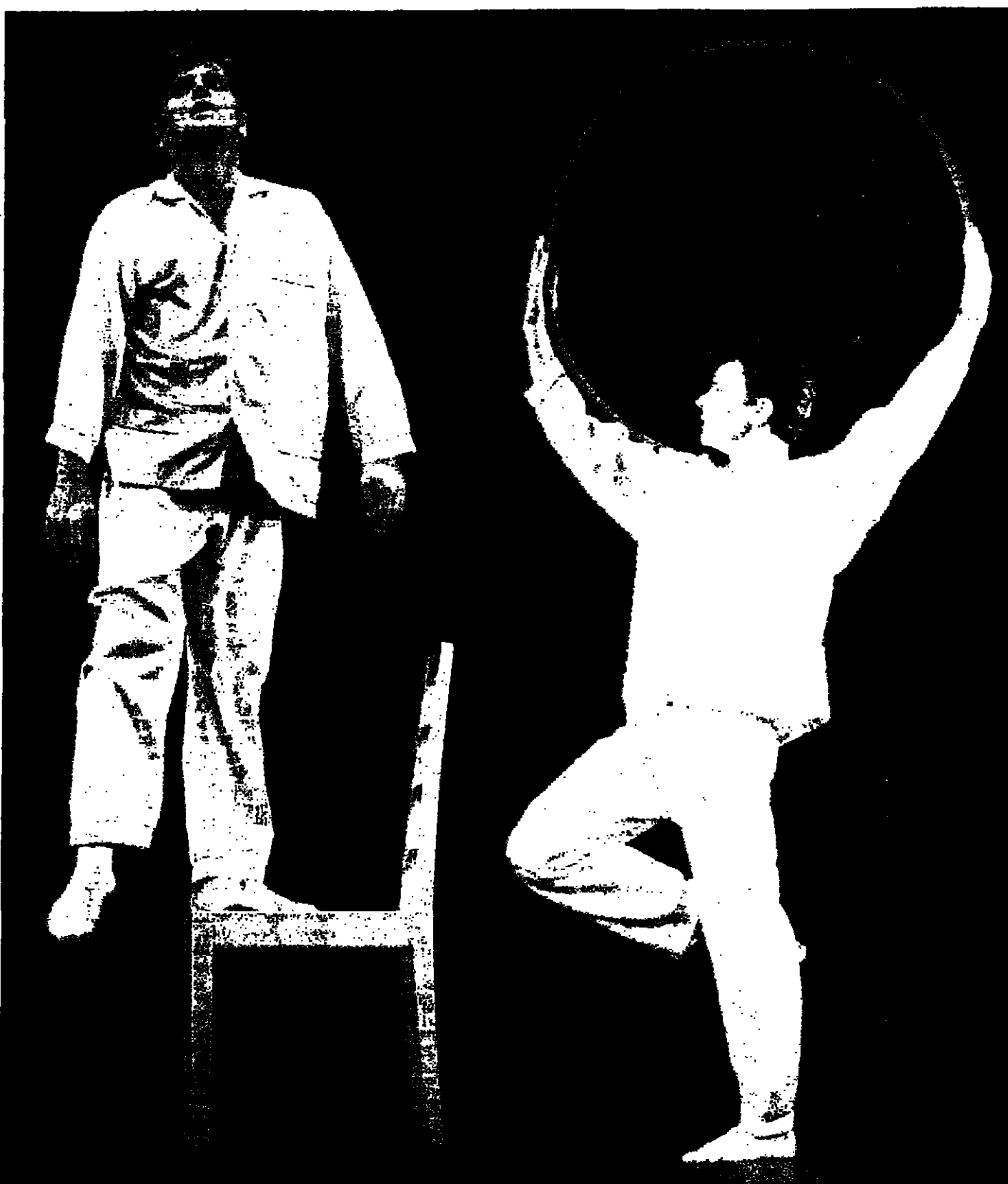
'I know a lot of people come to see me dance because they've heard of me, they've seen me on television or in some bad movie'

Shove, was an enormous hit and quickly became Baryshnikov's signature piece. Later, when he took over American Ballet Theatre in 1989, he appointed Tharp as artistic associate and introduced the work of other leading American contemporary choreographers into the repertoire. "I have always been interested in modern dance, ever since I started to work with Twyla and Alvin Ailey," he says. "I worked with all of them, Paul Taylor, Merce Cunningham, Martha Graham, and I realised I wanted to work with modern dance in more depth. Somehow now it's the most interesting thing on the dance horizon. I don't see anybody seriously working with the classical vocabulary in an interesting way."

Ever since arriving in the West, in the days when being a Soviet defector still carried a certain mystique, Baryshnikov has evinced a canny ability to capitalise on his celebrity. In the early years "it helped me get any work I wanted because I knew all doors were open". Today he uses his stardom to draw a bigger audience to modern dance.

Although he stresses that White Oak "is very much a collective work" involving 14 dancers, he knows it is his name which sells the tickets. "It's a bit of a pressure on me because I know a lot of people come to see me dance because they've heard of me, they've seen me on television or in some bad movie," he says.

"Well, I'm probably in every programme, and I will be on stage



Master of all he undertakes: images of Baryshnikov dancing a solo entitled *Ten Suggestions*, choreographed by Mark Morris

mals, many rare and endangered species. "It's a luxury for us to be in such beautiful and extraordinary conditions. It's really magic."

Money for productions and touring is generated by the "Misha" industry: the top-of-the-line perfumes and leisure-wear which bear his name and which he vigorously promotes in personal appearances, on television and in stylish advertising campaigns.

"The fragrance is big business, big money," he admits. "I don't just lend my name to the products. I'm involved from the bottle to the packaging, to the scent, to the materials. It takes a lot of time but I tell you it pays bills."

What he sells is his glamorous image: a curious blend of pint-sized macho man, brooding Russian poet and American little boy lost. His well-documented personal life has also added spice to the mixture: from his stormy affair with the ballerina Celine Kirkland (who attacked him in her best-selling autobiography *Dancing on my Grave*) to his relationship with the actress Jessica Lange, by whom he has a ten-year-old daughter. His current partner is Lisa Rinna, a former ABT dancer; they have a two-year-old

son, and are expecting another child this summer.

Baryshnikov's commitment to White Oak, and to the self-marketing which pays for it, does not mean he has turned his back on Hollywood or Broadway, despite his mixed experiences on screen and stage. Although a success in Steven Berkoff's production of *Metamorphosis* on Broadway, he would think twice about tackling another stage role.

"It was probably the scariest experience in my life. I realise how unprepared I was and sometimes how naive about certain things. If someone came to me and said 'we want you to do this part in this play', I would say 'Yes, but can we have six months of rehearsals and then I will think about it'."

His career in Hollywood proved a disappointment: the box-office success of *The Turning Point* was followed by such low-impact releases as *Dancers and White Nights*. "My relationship with the West Coast film industry didn't really fly the way I thought it might. I thought I would never do another film and then I did one with Peter Sellers, *The Cabinet of Dr. Ramirez* [shown at Cannes last year]."

What about another cinema project? "If some director thinks I'm right for this project, and it's a director's quest and not a studio executive's..."

"But I decided that I should do what I do best and keep dancing and not to push anything. That's my decision for now."

White Oak Dance Project is at Sadler's Wells Theatre (071-278 8916) from April 2

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TOMORROW
Sheffield's stainless heritage

Driving home with a blow-up man

There was a time, a few years ago, when I grew so addicted to catching taxis in the street that I would sometimes hail them simply out of habit. You know how it is, when a harmless (though expensive) pleasure turns wayward and runs out of control. Well, like Wilfred Owen in a different context, I'm afraid I just went "hunting wild". No black cab was safe if I had a fiver in my pocket. The mere sight of a yellow "For Hire" light elicited an instant Pavlovian response: waving a rolled-up newspaper, I would hop about on the kerb and drool involuntarily, all down the front of my anorak.

In the past few weeks, of course, the connotations of climbing into the back of a taxi have been radically altered. Saying "Crouch End, and step on it" has become the cringes-look-behind-you equivalent of hissing "Goodness, Grandma, what big teeth you have", and offering your wrists for handcuffs. The hunter has become the hunted. Women have started looking at taxis and seeing only the word "rapist" glowing menacingly in the dark. And, as our old friend Pavlov used to say, it makes you spit.

The harm is so easily done. Overnight, the benign London

cabbie has been transformed in the public imagination from a bloke in an old cardigan who grumbles about legal tender, into Jack the Ripper on derv. Whereas you used to feel protected in the back of the cab — free to mime exaggerated apologies to other motorists as you veered crazily across their path — the circumspect female passenger must now remember that she is principally not "in transit" but "at risk". And aside from producing a life-size inflatable man from her briefcase, and balancing it with its arm round her shoulder on the seat beside her, she has few means of restoring her carefree confidence.

The trouble with new insecurities is that they cast a shadow over past experience, too. Was I a fool to feel safe in taxis in the past? To think of all the times I have been dragged into conversation with the back of a taxi-driver's neck, shouting "Too right" and "You've got a point there" at his short back and sides, while straining to catch his appalling string-em-up gist over the roar of the engine. What risks I may have run. I mean, what about that seemingly nice driver who told me all about his impending divorce, sitting outside my house one December evening in 1988? Must

SINGLE LIFE
Lynne Truss on the
good old days of
screaming "taxi"



I now wonder whether there was some ulterior motive at work? I mean, other than the twenty-three quid that clocked up on the meter? Mini-cabs are another matter, of course. And here, I think, the retrospective horror is entirely appropriate. In fact, I look back on my naïve mini-cab phase with the sort of nauseous, sweat-beading disbelief people usually feel when remembering that they once

climbed into a boxing-ring with a kangaroo. There was one particular mini-cab driver who would pick me up on Tuesday mornings to take me to a dawn shift at the typesetters (I worked for *The Listener*, at the time), and who would occasionally ask me for a date. I, in turn, would politely demur, at which point he would say cheerfully, "It's all right, darling. I won't rape you!" And I seem to remember I would smile weakly at this pleasantry, rather than lunge for the rip-cord on my inflatable man.

Why did I continue to travel with him? Because he promised so emphatically not to rape me? Small comfort in that. I think it was because I didn't want to make a big deal out of it, for fear of making things worse. But things got quite a bit worse anyway, because he started offering me a job, as well. Nobody had heard of *The Listener*, he scoffed (he may well have been right, actually); why didn't I grab his offer of editing the soon-to-be-launched *Chaufeur and Limo Quarterly*? Instead? One Thursday evening, I came home and found him on my doorstep. "Go on, ask me in," he said. "I won't rape you!" Somehow the sub-text to this unusual char-up line suddenly became inescap-

ably clear, even to me. So, in order to save both of us any further embarrassment, I went out and bought myself a car.

No doubt the black cab rape scare will blow over. In the meantime, the idea that women are currently spurning taxis (and choosing instead to walk home along lonely railway embankments) is so ghastly that it makes your veins go all cold and crackly, like ice-pops. But then the intensely annoying thing about this scare is that it has created yet another area of everyday life in which women face the awesome customary dilemma of "damned if you do, and damned if you don't". Take the risk seriously, and you are (of course) over-reacting to statistical probabilities; ignore the risk, and you appear foolhardy. Refuse to go out at all, and you are imbecilic. Set up a do-it-yourself tear-gas factory in the shed, and you can be thrown in the slammer. So, as you stand at the kerb-side at midnight, paralysed into inaction as the last cabs glide by, it is no wonder you rip your *Life & Times* to pieces with your teeth. Men don't have this problem, do they? It's all so bloody unfair.

TOMORROW
Private Life: John Diamond

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Down and out, then and now

Peter Lewis reports on a new stage adaptation of George Orwell's classic 1920s account of life on the streets of Paris and London

Such is the magnetism exerted by the name of George Orwell that an adaptation of his first book, *Down and Out in Paris and London*, has attracted crowds wherever it has toured, not only in the audience, but on stage. At every town that the Paine's Plough Company has visited, the stage crowds of Paris kitchen-skivvies and London down-and-outs are supplied by up to 50 local members of the general public.

When the production opens at Riverside Studios, Hammersmith, tonight, the crowd will include, as usual, a sprinkling of Orwell fanatics who have read everything he wrote and know his life backwards, like the taxi driver who spends every idle moment in his cab reading Orwell.

Because of Equity rules, the extras get no pay and no "lines" (they are allowed to "improvise" speech), but that does not deter the volunteers: after one radio advertisement they deluged the company's switchboard. There are no auditions — because nobody is turned down. They have to commit themselves, however, to appearing for at least one week of the three-week run.

In London and in Birmingham, the ranks of extras have been swelled by people who, while not actually homeless, know what it is like to sleep rough. Several are street entertainers or squatters, one was a well-to-do man who lost everything in mid-life and spent ten years on the streets of Birmingham; there, the "Theatre of the Unemployed" provided many of the crowd. In Hammersmith, many are local people who have never been on a stage before, while some are mature drama students.

Anna Furse, director of Paine's Plough and of the show, refuses to make a spectacle of the homeless. "It would be degrading and exploiting genuinely homeless

people to put them among professional actors who are not, and then say cheerio to them at the end. But one reason for staging Orwell's book is that it makes people ask themselves how we should respond as individuals to the beggars in our streets.

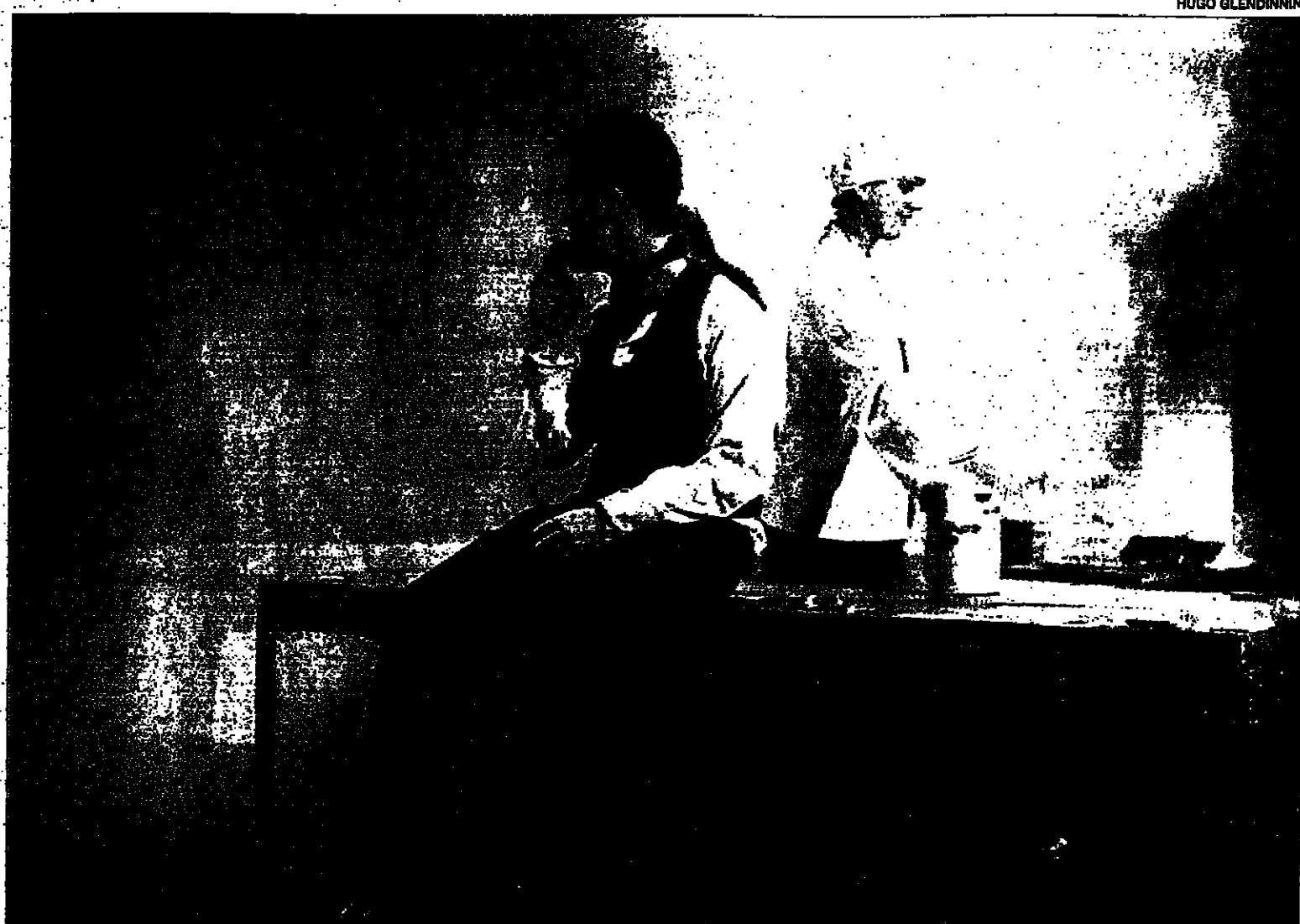
The difference between now and his time is that the people sleeping out are not many old tramps, but young people who want work or education. Now we are all confronted with poverty and we suffer from compassion fatigue.

There is no way of comparing homeless figures now and in 1928-29 when Orwell was investigating the problem. Shelter estimates that 2,000-3,000 people are sleeping rough in London and 5,000 more in the country. There is a gala performance of *Down and Out in Paris and London* on March 21 for Shelter's benefit.

Unusually, the production began in France when Paine's Plough was invited to open a new European Theatre Centre at Chalons-sur-Saône with a specially-conceived work. Furse commissioned her resident writer, Nigel Gearing, to adapt Orwell's book into a script more in French than in English and advertised for bilingual actors.

Dans la déshé à Paris et à Londres proved that a French provincial audience was held by Orwell, even though the dialogue of English tramps was beyond their grasp. In England, the script became 90 per cent English, but after a visit to Glasgow, the show returns to France.

Orwell's book had a prolonged and difficult birth. When he wrote about his time in Paris in 1929, as a half-starved dishwasher, he was told his text was too short for publication. So he added to it his experiences of common lodging houses, work-house spikes and life on the road,



Audience participation: in Paine's Plough's Orwell adaptation, members of the public play Paris kitchen-skivvies and London down-and-outs

with which he had been testing himself in borrowed tramp's clothing ever since he resigned in disgust from the Imperial Police in Burma.

Even so, the book was written and rejected twice (once by T.S. Eliot). He finally abandoned it at the house of a woman friend. He told her to throw it away, but kept the paper-clips, the only part of value. Instead, she persuaded an agent, who persuaded Victor Gollancz of its merit.

It came out in 1933, but it was not until 1937, in *The Road to Wigan Pier*, that Orwell explained the feelings of guilt about his service in Burma, which had driven

him to go tramping. "I wanted to submerge myself, to get right down among the oppressed, to be one of them, and on their side against their tyrants," Orwell found that down among the "lowest of the low" he was happy: "I had a feeling of release, of adventure."

This, as Nigel Gearing points out, makes *Down and Out* hard to adapt to the stage. "It's not a novel, it's a chronicle of a quixotic spiritual journey to the lower depths of society, which he made in the tradition of the eccentric English traveller. But the play debates, as he

did, the question of how much you help down-and-outs by becoming one of them."

The final version has been shaped in rehearsal by the writer, director and cast of eight, who divide 54 parts between them. "We have tried to theatricalise the book without betraying the author's voice and to keep the wit and the pain in it," says Furse. "We didn't set out to create a conventional, well-made play, but to conjure up his world and his crisis of conscience."

Would Orwell have approved? He might well have liked the unorthodoxy of incorporating such numbers of enthusiastic ordinary people. So far, they have demonstrated their impressive ability to assimilate all that they have to remember in three three-hour sessions with the company's deputy director, Roxana Silbert.

"We do a lot of games and exercises to loosen people," she says. "We improvise each scene before they meet Anna and the actors. It's remarkable how quickly they mould themselves into a group. Visually, it's stunning to people the stage in a way that it seldom is nowadays."

There have been no disasters so far. Nobody has failed to show up, or smiled and waved at their friends. "We

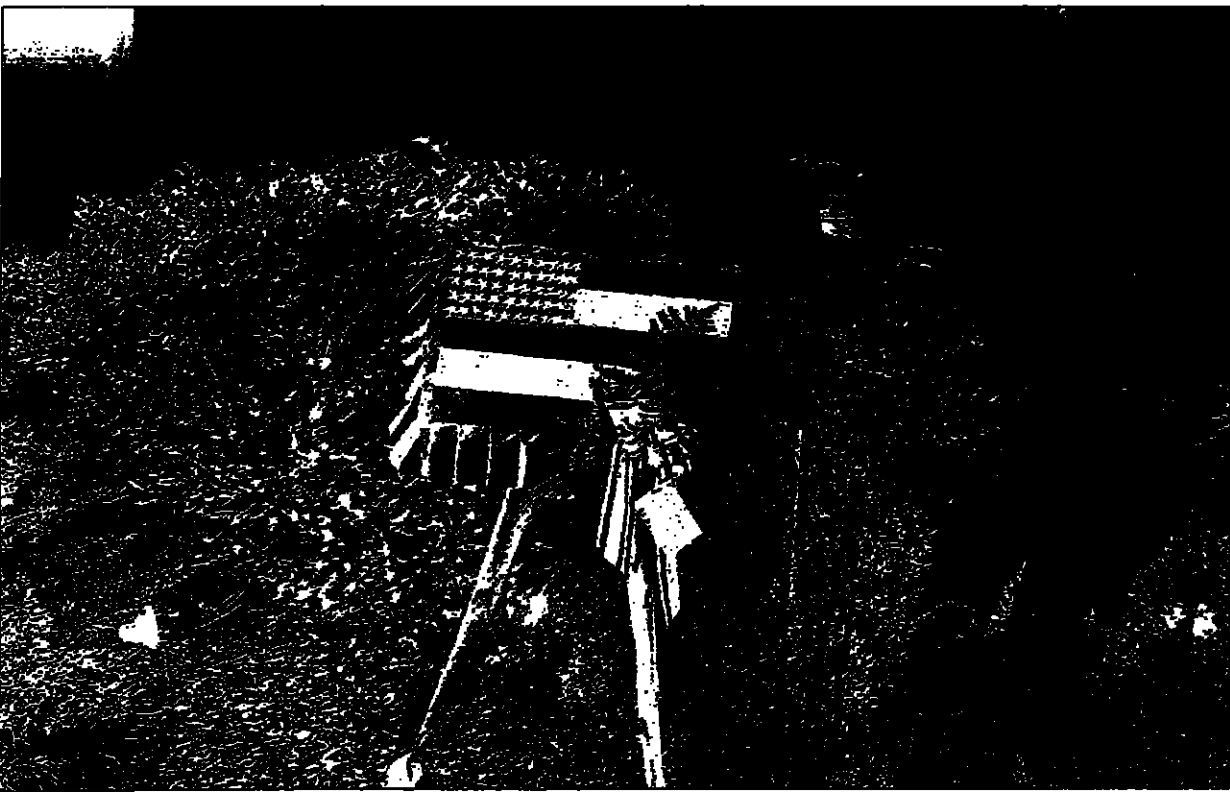
want them not to act, but to be themselves. In some ways, it's easier to direct people who have never tried than to direct amateurs who tend to try too hard."

Orwell might be surprised that his seemingly unlikely first book would be filling theatres 60 years after he wrote it. "I hope he would approve," says Gearing. "The facts of continuing poverty and inequality have made the questions he asked about our responses more relevant than ever for public debate."

Down and Out in Paris and London opens tonight at Riverside Studios, London W6 (081-748 3354) and runs until April 4.

GALLERIES

Common places in colour



A sharp eye for the bizarre and the gaudy: *Elvis's Grave*, from William Eggleston's 1984 Graceland series

The old associations still exist in photography, whether it be film or still: black and white equals grainy reality; colour signifies glee on the gingerbread. Historically, this is understandable, since black and white came first. But aesthetically, it is bizarre. After all, the real world is seen in colour. Reducing it to black and white must be an affectation. Yet even in the Seventies, when the American William Eggleston took up colour photography, it was something that had to be excused or specially justified.

As far as can be discovered, Eggleston never thought that any justification was necessary, other than that he liked the way his colour photographs looked. He began conventionally enough around 1969 with colour transparencies, but in 1973 he discovered mention of dye-transfer printing in a laboratory price list and wondered what it looked like. The first dye-transfer prints he saw were, perhaps significantly, advertising photography.

He loved the lurid, saturated colours. One of the first dye-transfer prints he made is in the retrospective show at the Barbican: *The Red Ceiling* (1973), in which the intense red of the ceiling in a friend's guest room, set off by

John Russell Taylor reviews a Barbican exhibition of the photographer William Eggleston's lurid and surreal images

white electric wires, has a dream-like, or perhaps nightmarish, intensity.

The picture is significant in other ways. It is wilfully everyday — an unremarkable picture of the unremarkable — but the improvised electrical arrangements are recorded with the same fascinated scrutiny as another photographer would turn on a historical monument or a world-famous beauty.

A certain amount of nonsense has been talked (sometimes by Eggleston himself) about the "democracy" of his vision. According to this, every image has equal value, based on refusal to discriminate between "important" and "unimportant" subjects. But after all, the photographer always makes the choice of what he thinks is worth while to turn his camera on, and it is perhaps necessary to insist that Eggleston is no documentary realist.

He began as a disciple of Walker Evans, who was also more of a chooser and arranger than at a glance he seems to be. But in Eggleston's pictures the celebration

of the ordinary and unremarked goes beyond the apparent realism of Evans; many of his pictures, such as that of the shoes and fluff under a bed, photographed from floor level, or the famous ones of the plastic dolls perched on a car radiator, look so closely at a tiny corner of reality that the effect is to make solid, mundane reality appear quite surreal.

Clearly those in charge of Elvis Presley's mansion, Graceland, knew exactly what they were doing when they commissioned Eggleston to record it in 1984: he would not stint on the bizarre, but in a curious way he would take it straight, not send it up.

The most indicative series of all is probably his extensive Election Eve project of 1976 (the Election being Carter's) all done in Plains, Georgia, and showing better than anywhere else his view that everything is significant. He insists that he gets this effect by not using a view-finder; he calls these "shotgun pictures" because they were taken, he

alleges, as immediately and instinctively as he would shoot at a moving target without taking careful aim.

In fact, the pictures of unimportant objects like an old petrol pump or a weed growing against an abandoned wood out-house work the other way round. They appear to be as meticulously composed as the pictures of "important" locations and things. Still, either way, equality rules.

Later he may become more ordinary: one photographer's view of exotic Egypt is liable to look much like another's. But in some ways this reflects the spread of his influence in the last 20 years, so that what then seemed extraordinary in his work has now entered the dialect of the tribe.

However, these early works have lost none of their ability to irritate and amaze. Even in London, even in 1989, he has retained all his skill in seeing what nobody else sees, and astonishing the world with his vision.

Eggleston — Colour Photographs: Ancient and Modern is at the Barbican Art Gallery, Barbican Centre, London, EC2 (071-638-4141). Monday, Wednesday to Saturday 10am-6.45pm; Tuesday 10am-6.45pm; Sunday 12-6.45pm; until May 4. Admission £4.50, concessions £2.00.

TELEVISION REVIEW

Night class passion

Is the auto-didact a dodo? Educational traditionalists would certainly have us believe the species is extinct. The days when working men picked up Shakespeare and improved themselves, they say, are long gone, overtaken by the irresistible rise of television culture and the video philistine. A distinguished novelist told me the other day that Britain's cultural impoverishment could be directly related to the decline of its evening classes.

Yet the reality is not so bleak. Six million Britons are thought to be involved in adult learning at the moment, and this week their achievements are being celebrated across the country in the first Adult Learners' Week. Television is playing its part with a series of special slots plugging the "second chance" theme.

Last night's Channel 4 play, *Homage and His Pigeons*, dwelt wistfully upon the challenge of education in later life and the riches of "the long and lonely self-education game". This gentle parable, based on a true story, reflected on the lives of Des and Colin, two childhood friends from the Welsh valleys, and their spiritual debt to Homer, a miner and pigeon fancier who read the classics by candlelight, learnt to paint

and inspired a whole community with his learning and freely-dispersed wisdom.

Poor old Homer breathes his last on an ill-fated visit to London to see Des play *Toad in the Wind in the Willows*, but returns from the other side to haunt his former charges as a sort of educational Banquo, urging them on to ever greater discovery.

Karl Francis's direction managed to keep the apparition's homilies just the right side of platitudinous and sentimentality. Thankfully, one came away without feeling unduly sermonised. The point — that education is personal and continuous rather than institutional — was straightforward and sensitively handled.

Most interesting to me was the social subtext of the play. Like the Methodist radicals of the 19th century and the workers who got their heads down in libraries during the General Strike of 1926, Homer seeks self-instruction as a way out of social disadvantage, a means of political empowerment.

He has a Ruskinian vision of the working man bettering himself by reading and creating, and gets his neighbours to read the turbulent writings of Proudhon and Marx, as well as the novels of Dostoevsky.

Doubtless many working-class communities in the age of heavy industry had their Homers: local intellectual gurus who taught anyone who would listen and sent young and hopeful people on their own little Odysseys of the mind. Adult education in Britain today is better organised and involves more people than ever before. But the kind of visionary humanism which saw great literature as the great leveller does seem to have had its day, which is a pity.

A question to ask in Adult Learners' Week is what new patterns of local self-help will emerge in our much more pluralistic, diffuse society. If nothing else, we can be sure that television will play a vital role in it, as it is during this special week-long campaign. Who is to say that the video cassette is not the best tool with which to prise scholarship out of the ivory tower and into the living room?

MATTHEW D'ANCONA

THEATRE

Mixed reports

As You Desire Me
New End, Hampstead

THIS late Pirandello is rarely clear: the theme is interesting (moderately), but the method chosen to convey it relies to an extraordinary degree on reported speech. Not just reported action: a certain amount of this is inevitable, so that here we have to be told one way or another — actually about four times — that Bruno's wife Lucia was so savagely treated by Austrian officers occupying her villa in the first world war that she went mad. And disappeared. And has been given up for dead by all but her husband. And that the Unknown Woman dancing her life away in decadent Berlin may be her.

Is she or isn't she? That is the question Pirandello poses it too because she cannot remember, though for a time she is prepared to be, as she tells Bruno, "as you desire me". But as soon

as the action moves back to Italy the curse of reported speech starts working.

The method spreads a fog of uncertainty across the play, doubtless the atmosphere Pirandello sought to engender. But unlike Anouilh's *Traveller Without Baggage*, which articulates a similar theme, or Pirandello's own *Right You Are (If You Think So)*, the story of Lucia lacks dramatic thrust.

Perhaps in a more expansive production than this by Derek Wax for Power House Pictures, one where fewer actors appear to be reciting their lines, the issues of truth and variable personality might generate more interest. Yet I doubt it.

The Berlin act is absurd, with everyone ranting or sobbing; the Italian acts veer to the other extreme and are dull until the last ten minutes when the cast show conviction, notably Sandra Fox as the Unknown. One is grateful for this change but it comes far too late.

JEREMY KINGSTON

TOMORROW

Reviews of the latest films and of Covent Garden's new production of *Death in Venice*

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ARTS BRIEF

Gallic choices

THERE were surprises and upsets at the French film awards, the Césars, which were held last week in Paris. Maurice Pialat's painstaking *Van Gogh*, nominated for 11 awards, emerged with just one, for best actor (Jacques Dutronc). Instead, the film that swept the board was Alain Corneau's historical drama *Tous les matins du monde*, featuring Gérard Depardieu as the baroque composer Marin Marais. This won seven Césars, including best film, best director, best photography and best supporting actress (Anne Brochet).

The outrageous black comedy *Delicatessen* took four prizes: for best script, best editing, best set design and best first film. The Césars are not usually regarded as the best form guide to the Oscars.

Playing safe?

AN UNUSUAL anniversary has been noted by the London Symphony Orchestra. The orchestra's American tour this spring will come almost exactly 80 years after its first transatlantic voyage in April 1912, when it became the first British orchestra to play in the United States. On that occasion, the tour schedule was altered at short notice: had it not been, the orchestra was booked to sail on the maiden voyage of a ship called the Titanic.

Cole curtailed

IN MANHATTAN a federal judge has upheld the right of the licensee to withhold performance permission for a gay, cross-gender production of Cole Porter's *Anything Goes*. The production had already run at Fire Island, New York, and the Alliance Theatre in Dallas before the licensee, Tams Wirtmark Musical Library, learned of the casting and declined to renew performance rights. "Cole Porter must be spinning in his grave," said the would-be producer, Donald Shea.

Max on canvas



A NEW portrait went on show at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery yesterday. It is of Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Scotland's most famous composer-in-residence, painted by John Bellamy, one of the country's most admired contemporary painters. Bellamy, whose poster depicting Chinatown has been enlivening the London Underground for several months, has produced a typical *tour de force*: the impish-looking composer is described in glowing colours and trenchant brushwork. This is an auspicious week for Orkney-based Maxwell Davies: the fifth and sixth of his Strathclyde Concertos will be premiered in Glasgow on Friday.

Last chance...

MORE than two hours of pastiche Molière in rhymed couplets, starting with a 25-minute monologue? It is impossible; and yet somehow the impossible works. David Hirst's *La Bête*, with Alan Cummings hilariously inventive as a literary poseur suffering from terminal logorrhea, is well worth catching before it closes at the Lyric, Hammersmith (081-741 2311) on Saturday.

Method in her ministry

The first female president-elect of the Methodist Conference is a little surprised to have made it to the top. She speaks to Kate Muir

In George Eliot's *Adam Bede*, set in 1799, a young Methodist woman, plainly dressed in black, stands in a cart on the village green and preaches to the assembled crowd of workmen and farmers. Banned from mainstream churches, the early Methodists, including the fictional Dinah Morris, found pulpits where they could.

Dinah begins the evening with a prayer "in a clear but not loud voice" with the story in St John: "When a poor woman, laden with sins, went out to the well to draw water, she found Thee sitting at the well." Jesus asks her for some water to drink, and in return offers her knowledge of "the water of life". Eliot observes that "nothing could be less like the ordinary type of the Ranter than Dinah. She was not preaching as she heard others preach, but speaking directly from her own emotions, and under the inspirations of her own simple faith."

Four years later, the 1803 Methodist Conference banned women preachers, and it was not until the 1970s that it allowed women to be ordained. The Rev Kathleen Richardson was the first married woman with children to become a minister, and in June will take up the year-long post as the first female president of the Methodist Conference — Methodist equivalent to the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury.

Last Sunday evening, Mrs Richardson was also preaching. Not in the open air, but in Sandal Magna Methodist Church in Wakefield. Her audience was far from rustic in pearls and suits, but she mirrored Dinah in her plain black garb, and the sermon began with the same reading from St John. "I've chosen this because it is one of the significant encounters between Jesus and a woman," she said, it being by coincidence a service to mark International Women's Day.

Daring moves were afoot: the choir was women only, and the ushers were usherettes. Mrs Richardson's sermon was quite radical, too, going straight from Jacob's well of The Bible to its present site next to a beleaguered West Bank refugee camp. Her calm, smooth words, coupled with her close cap of silver hair and fine bones framed in black, mesmerised the largely pensionable congregation.

"Kathleen Richardson has an immaculate capacity to turn thought into speech: she manages to be simple and profound without it becoming a cliché," says a senior Methodist. She is expected to make an exceptional president in her year of office. "People behave themselves in her presence. They feel they're heard by her in meetings, and she does not let the intensity of church life distance her from what's going on in the world."



Kathleen Richardson at Sandal Magna Methodist church, Wakefield: 'I feel that what I represent is the very stuff and bones of Methodism, the ordinary part'

From such an introduction, piety would be expected to ooze from her every pore. Instead, Mrs Richardson is thoroughly down to earth. The interview is conducted at her suggestion during a walk in the Yorkshire Sculpture Park and over custard tarts in Othello's café in Wakefield.

As for the presidency, "I see the year as part of the affirmation of women's ministry, and affirmation of the very ordinary local aspects of the church and its community. I feel what I represent is the very stuff and bones of Methodism, the ordinary part."

At 54, she is rather surprised to find herself at the top of the pile, and says she is not at all pushy. That lack of ambition and self-consciousness seem to give her a natural confidence. She is not afraid, unlike many of the clergy, to talk about politics.

"I believe all Christian people must be political, because the world is run through politics. So long as we deal with issues and not the politicians themselves, I feel we can speak our minds. After all, John Wesley [Methodism's founder] started with a feeling that the church then wasn't living up to its calling, that something had to be done. I don't think that burden's ever lifted from the church. You've got to speak out."

Indeed, Mrs Richardson's friend and mentor, the former president Dr John Vincent, regularly spoke out against Margaret Thatcher's policies, particularly those on poverty and unemployment. Can we expect her to do the same? "Maybe there's a feeling the Methodist Church can say things the established

'I believe all Christian people must be political, because the world is run through politics'

church can't or won't. In a sense we've nothing to lose — we don't have any government sponsorship or big names who give us money, so perhaps we can afford to be more honest."

Naturally, John Major's lottery has taken a slamming from the Methodists for being a "cop-out" which takes from the poor instead of the wealthy. Mrs Richardson says, however, that the days of the banning of church tombolas are in decline. Stark, table-thumping Methodism, as featured in Jeanette Winterson's novel, *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*, makes her recoil.

Mrs Richardson is keen on ecumenical work. She has to be, as congregations decline and churches close or amalgamate — there are about

1,250 Methodist left in Britain. She is the chairman of West Yorkshire Methodist district: "I'm a rubber band holding 210 churches together." With high unemployment, the area was finding it hard to bring in ministers, never mind worshippers, but Mrs Richardson has proved a magnet.

"Numbers are going down, but there is a feeling of confidence. People are not there because the mill owner or their parents tell them. They're there of their own volition." Although congregations are getting older, the Methodist revival among young parents searching for guidance. The most successful churches have been the Pentecostals. "They offer simple answers and certainty."

Perhaps they see us as a bit woolly.

For instance, the Methodists have been less than definite on the matter of homosexuality. A committee which represented all shades of opinion emerged "with no clear mind", and the matter is now being re-discussed. There are one or two ministers who have declared their homosexuality. "It is considered as one aspect of their personality, and it depends on how well they deal with it."

Women now make up 9 per cent of Methodist ministers, compared with the Anglicans, who still ban women's ordination. Wesley might approve of the latter. He warned his disciples to "converse sparingly and cautiously with women". Mrs Richardson believes he intended by that to keep his young ministers celibate before ordination: Wesley certainly encouraged women preachers, and they were not banned until after his death.

Celibacy was also expected of deaconesses when Mrs Richardson started training in 1961 for the only job open to her. But she fell in love and left on marriage, returning when the ministry opened to women. Her husband has a brain cyst and can no longer work, so she and her daughters share that responsibility. "When I discovered Wesley said he hadn't travelled one mile less than if he'd never married, I thought that was sad. What a waste."

Although fond of the Wesley brother's hymns, she is still irked by some of the language, and quietly substitutes "people" for "mankind". She draws the line at "Our Mother which art in Heaven", though. "You have to be very careful where you use that," she laughs.

She feels that the argument over women priests is rather a distraction when there is more important work to be done. As she says to Anglican women-in-waiting: "One day your Church will catch up with what God is doing."

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Honest but indecent?

Why some viewers find television advertising for sanitary products either embarrassing or confusing

In January this year a television commercial was launched in Britain which has caused grave offence. The commercial is neither violent, sexy, nor politically incorrect. It is simply embarrassing.

In this commercial, Claire Rayner, agony aunt, interviews a number of women in a studio about the new Vespri Silhouette sanitary towel. An ink test (blue) shows how absorbent the new towels are, and Mrs Rayner holds one up to show its innovative shape "with wings".

This is a format taken directly from the marketing of nappies — a simple, clinical-looking demonstration backed up by testimonials from satisfied customers. But if Saatchi & Saatchi, the advertising agency that made the advertisement, thought the formula was safe, it has slammed against one of our few remaining taboos. This is definitely in the We Don't Want To Hear About it department.

So far, the Independent Television Commission (ITC), which regulates all British commercial television, has received 227 complaints about the Vespri advertisement. This year, only the notorious Citroën commercial, in which a woman is abducted in the back of a car, has invoked more wrath. ITC is not allowed to show the Vespri adverts between 4 and 9pm, on weekends or public holidays. Channel 4 has no time restrictions, and has shown the commercial between 5 and 6pm.

Very nearly all the complainants were women, embarrassed at having to explain what the advert was about to their children.

"I want to explain periods to my children, when I feel they are ready to know — and I don't need TV adverts to force it on me," wrote Mrs Thompson, of Stoke-on-Trent.

Of course, for the children of parents who do not feel their offspring are ready to know about periods until they are about 25, the advertise-



Safe formula? Claire Rayner is the famous face in the television advertisement for Vespri

ments may prove useful. "If you read the problem pages, there are still girls writing in asking if their nosebleeds are part of their period," says Esme Newton-Dunn, a spokeswoman for Johnson & Johnson, which makes Vespri Silhouettes. "What has upset people here is that Claire Rayner talks about everything in an earthy, practical way. She holds up the product and says 'This is it, this is what you do with it.'"

"Rayner Terrors" ran the headline in the Brighton Evening Argos. The agony aunt is, almost by definition, unembarrassable, and the British take embarrassment seriously. Many women fiercely defend their privacy; they don't want women's things aired in public. The ITC did not uphold the objections to the Vespri commercial, as it found nothing anti-social, immoral, hurtful or, by most conventional standards, indecent in the content. However, in its Janu-

ary complaints report, it acknowledges the need to revise the guidelines on "sanpro" (sanitary products) advertising to give manufacturers an opportunity to explain the products without putting the audience off their TV dinner.

Saatchi's new commercial for Vespri Ultra is marginally more coy than the Claire Rayner approach, using computer animation for the ink demonstration. When it was first screened last month, the company received 1,000 calls a day for free samples.

The seemingly sudden proliferation of sanpro commercials is not due to any relaxation of the rules governing television advertising. Sanpro advertisements have been shown on British television since 1986, and 18 months ago the rules were relaxed so that the product was allowed to be shown outside its packet. The change has been in the ex-

planation of Sanitary Protection Manufacturers include certain words which are not to be used, such as "leakage", "soiled", "bulky" or "clean". The point is to avoid talking about the Thing Itself: the catchwords are "confidence" and "freshness".

One Tampax commercial uses the expression "your time" in a conspiratorial tone, freeze-framing action shots with the catchline "Don't let time stop for you". Two men watched the advertisement and confessed they had no idea what it was for. The latest commercial for Simplicity features a woman who walks about doing assertive things like buying drinks, stopping the traffic and helping a man in distress. The advert has the euphemistic catchline "Take everything in your stride".

A commercial for Body-form, showing a bold and frightfully glamorous woman jumping out of an aeroplane, uses the symbolic safety harness to explain the benefits of the product. But with all these clever charades to befuddle male and young viewers, one does not always connect the advert with the product.

"Those catchy little tunes are a nightmare," Deborah, a radio reporter, says. "I find myself singing 'Woooa Body-form' in public." "This sort of advertising is aimed at telling you the product doesn't exist," says Bernadette Valley, of the Women's Environmental Network, and also the author of *The Sanitary Protection Scandal*. "They can't mention words like 'blood'. They also tell you that you will be able to hang glide and swim the Channel and all those other things women feel like doing during a period."

Perhaps this mystifying strategy explains why now, every time a woman floats across the screen with a knowing look, some viewers assume it is an advertisement for Tampax — when in fact they are being sold a car, or a holiday in the Algarve.

CLARE LONGRIGG

My husband behind enemy bars

Margaret Mather tells how, on the eve of the Falklands conflict, her British husband was in prison in Argentina accused of being a spy

The first warning came in a phone call from my husband's newspaper. The tone was a little too casual.

Ian and two other British journalists had not been heard from for several days. There was nothing to worry about, I was told.

In March 1982 my husband had been covering a Nato meeting in the United States, in his capacity as defence and diplomatic correspondent for *The Observer*, when the newspaper sent him to cover the Falklands conflict from Argentina.

He arrived in Argentina on April 2 and, together with a photographer from his paper and a journalist from *The Sunday Times*, he had decided to travel down the eastern seaboard to see if an Argentinean air-force pilot would be willing to fly them to the Falklands, which the Argentinians had just invaded.

My husband, an experienced foreign correspondent, had gone missing before for a few days at a time. He was sure to turn up, I thought. The British task force had only just set sail. If there was to be fighting over the Falklands it would be some time before it started.

But as time went by and there was still no word from Ian my sense of foreboding increased. Then one night at around 10pm our younger daughter rushed into the bedroom. "It's on the radio. Daddy's in prison in a place called 'Shia'. Do they execute people for spying in Argentina?"

"Of course they don't," I assured her. But really I had no idea. I did not know much about Argentina. But what little I did know was not exactly reassuring. Argentina was the country in which thousands of people had disappeared during the so-called "Dirty War".

Ian and his two colleagues were in prison in Ushuaia, in Tierra del Fuego. The Argentine government had been holding them for a week while denying all knowledge of their whereabouts. Now they were charged with espionage under section 224 of the Argentine Penal Code.

I got out an atlas, and discovered that Ushuaia was the most southerly town in the world, over 8,000 miles away. It seemed impossibly remote. How on earth were we going to get him out?

Yet there were grounds for optimism. Ian was to be interrogated by a judge in a preliminary hearing. People were confident that he would then be expelled. The Argentinians were expelling other foreign journalists who were arrested in sensitive areas. The three British journalists worked for two national newspapers. Surely, the papers would have enough influence to get them deported immediately?

Finding a lawyer who would defend the three was not easy as most law firms in Argentina were unwilling to risk taking on three citizens of the enemy as their clients. But in the end Willi Balaban, an Argentinian of Romanian extraction, agreed to take the case. Señor Balaban travelled from Buenos Aires to Ushuaia and prepared an excellent detailed defence, which he thought it prudent to preface with a lengthy statement of his own patriotism.

My husband, he told the judge, was a newspaper "fix man". "That is to say he specialises in reporting about areas in the world where the situations are particularly tense. He has been to Cuba, Afghanistan, Libya and Iran among other places."

He described how Ian had been diverted by his newspaper to Argentina and that "the data in his notebook is relevant to his journalistic interest in the situation". But, of course, there was one vital difference between Ian's case and that of other journalists arrested in Argentina at that time. Ian was British.

On April 18, a colleague called from Ushuaia, where he had been sent by the two papers to follow the hearing. "I've got some bad news," he said. After a three-day preliminary hearing the judge had decided that there was a case to answer, and that the three would be put on trial for espionage. The judge stated that he believed that they had been "acting more as defenders of Britain than as professional journalists".

My heart sank. The task force was now closing in. Diplomatic efforts to avoid conflict had collapsed. From

then on I followed every detail of the conflict, just as those who had loved ones with the task force must have been doing.

I threw myself into the burgeoning campaign by the two newspapers and other journalists to secure the release of the three men. It was decided to use the resources of the two newspapers to bombard the Argentinian government with protests from news organisations and human-rights organisations. Readers were invited to write to the prison, via the two newspapers, but many of the letters did not appear to be getting through. Ian discovered that prison wardens were keeping them for the value of the stamps from Britain. So he promised that any warden who brought letters to his cell could keep the envelope and the stamps. This seemed to work.

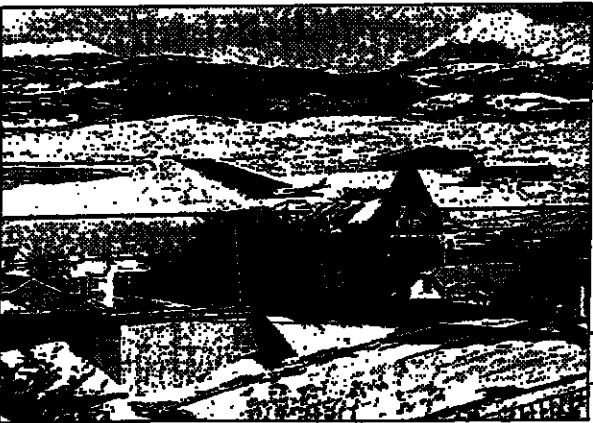
By this time, towards the end of April, Argentina had declared the whole of its southern region a war zone, and it became impossible for anyone to reach Ushuaia from Buenos Aires. We came to rely on two women who lived in Ushuaia, an Argentinian teacher of English literature and a British woman married to an Argentinian, who were prepared to risk local ire to visit the three and keep us informed about their condition. A BBC team, cleverly chosen for their South African passports, had been allowed to remain in Ushuaia. They visited my husband in the prison twice a week.

Even though I had not heard of Ushuaia until a few months earlier I came to know it intimately. Colleagues of Ian sent postcards and street maps, and those who had visited him even drew plans of the prison showing the cell Ian was occupying.

Ushuaia is in a beautiful setting on the Beagle Channel surrounded by snow-covered mountains, the sort of place that looked ideal for an outdoor holiday. Yet my husband was coped up with two others in one small cell measuring six feet by nine feet.

My bedroom was now piled with papers connected with the campaign. But I tried to maintain an air of normality. I continued with my teaching at Middlesex Polytechnic, even though my large group of art therapy students was getting increasingly short shrift. I was forced to abandon temporarily my Open University studies. Our elder daughter, in her second year at Oxford, would come home for regular first-hand briefings.

Then the Swiss government, which by this time was representing British interests in Argentina, succeeded in negotiating with the Argentine government the right for me to phone my husband at the jail once a week. The call had to be made at midnight.



Ushuaia airbase and snowy peaks: a view from the jail

British time on Thursdays, and we were allowed to talk for up to 15 minutes provided neither of us made any reference to the military situation.

Getting through was not easy. My fingers would become sore with the repeated dialling, and sometimes it would be 2am before I succeeded. I would try through the operator, only to find that the Argentinian operators would often refuse to put the call through. As soon as it was mentioned that the call was from London the line would go dead. Sometimes we would try getting through via Ireland or Paris, and once when an Argentinian operator asked: "Is that London?" the British telephone operator answered in a perfect Australian accent. "No mate, this is Melbourne Australia calling." I was put through.

I learned a few key words. "Esposa, esposa," (wife) I would shout when I eventually got through to the prison.



Margaret Mather's imaginary view of her husband Ian in prison in Ushuaia, the world's most southerly town, after he was accused of spying

Sometimes the authorities did not honour the 15 minutes' time allowance. It all depended on who was on duty in the prison communications room. Some of the prison officers had strong feelings about the fighting. After all, the *General Belgrano*, the Argentinian cruiser sunk on May 2 by the Royal Navy with the loss of hundreds of lives, had sailed from Ushuaia on its last journey.

Every time they refused to allow us to talk I phoned the Foreign Office to complain. They would take up the matter with the Swiss, who contacted the Brazilian government which was acting on Argentina's behalf. It was as circuitous as that.

Gradually the prison authorities began to appear more relaxed, so much so that I inadvertently mentioned to

journalists' newspapers to use his high-level contacts with South American governments to lobby for their release.

In Britain I was interviewed regularly on the radio, and on one occasion I even managed to use my weekly call to Ian to do a quick interview with him for the BBC *Today* programme. The local newspaper from Ian's home town in Lancashire called. I told them I didn't want an article about the agony of the wife who waits. Inevitably, their headline was: "The agony of the wife who waits."

I knew from my talks with Ian that the campaign had produced one vital result. The judge told Ian he had received over 600 messages of protest from all over the world. Consequently, instructions were sent to the prison ordering that the three should be given proper treatment (at one stage all reading material had been taken away). We found ways to send parcels to the prison containing books, extra clothing and supplements to the meagre diet.

As the weeks went by it became increasingly clear that my husband's fate was inextricably linked to the fighting. The nagging question was how the Argentinians would react to their defeat, which seemed only a matter of time. Would they seek revenge on any British citizens under their control?

Eventually, after the Argentinian surrender in the Falklands on June 14, Señor Balaban managed to reach Ushuaia once again. The judge, weary of being bombarded with protests, agreed to bail (\$10,000 for my husband alone). There was a further agonising week while arrangements were completed for the money to be delivered to the court. Then, three months after Ian's arrest, the judge signed an order releasing the three journalists on bail with permission to leave the country.

For the last time I phoned the prison, just to make sure. A voice shouted back in Spanish a phrase I will never forget: "No son aquí. Libertad." They are not here. Freedom.

● A film of Ian Mather's return to Ushuaia last year will be shown as the second of a five-part series, *Falklands War Stories*, on BBC 2, 9.30pm, Thursday, March 19.

AND BRIEFLY

Guide to Budget

THE National Alliance of Women's Organisations has long been demanding a "gender analysis" of Budgets and other public expenditure statements. Jane Grant, the alliance's director, says: "We talked to John Major about one when he was Chancellor." She adds that the group showed a copy of "the women's budget statement issued in Australia and Canada" to Gillian Shephard, Under Secretary of State for Social Security. "She said this sort of thing was only possible in a small country, but we will continue to press for it. It's not separate 'his and her' budgets but a statement showing the impact of the Budget on childcare, benefits for part-time workers, maternity leave and tax allowances. We'd like every woman to ask her MP for one."

Smoking tips

THOSE who do not manage to stop smoking for National Non-smoking Day today might benefit from advice by Dr Chris Steel, in booklet and cassette form. The *Stop!* booklet (free when you send an A5 stamped self-addressed envelope to *Stop! Booklet*, PO Box 63, High Wycombe HP10 8XA) details methods ranging from old plays (removing temptation, quitting with a friend) to nicotine replacement therapy. The cassette, which talks smokers through a two-week quitting plan, costs £2.

Light facts

LOW-ENERGY lightbulbs used to be hard to find and difficult to fit, but they are increasingly accessible and easy to use. They may seem expensive, but can save money and energy resources in the long-run. A Mazda Low Energy 14-watt bulb costs around £10 with a reusable adaptor (replacement bulbs £5.99) from supermarkets such as Tesco, Asda and Sainsbury, and specialist shops. Its manufacturers claim it will save more than £14 over the eight standard 60-watt lightbulbs it replaces.

VICTORIA MCKEE

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Let's revisit Brideshead

Allan McKeown asks why you can buy second-hand cars but are denied repeats of old television favourites by the BBC and ITV

Broadcasters have somehow convinced the British public that having too many channels will lower the quality of television programmes. In fact, although you must be selective and own a dish, this is not true. Everyone can see the value of dedicated sport, news and film channels, but the most obvious channel is missing. Britain has a rich heritage of classic "used" television programmes, and viewers like to watch repeats — provided they are good programmes and were not shown last month.

Recently, the vintage series of *Porridge* and *Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em* scored far higher ratings than some new, first-run comedy series. Why not have a station dedicated to showing our most popular programmes of previous high quality? Channel 5 would be ideal. A format of locally owned stations airing predominantly used programmes has, however, been passed over by the Independent Television Commission. This is a great shame.

In America, the market for used programmes is the engine that drives the television industry. The networks do not pay producers the full cost of original programming if the programmes can be repeated in the used or secondary market.

Hit series are sold to non-network or local stations, which play the episodes nightly for 13 weeks. 65 shows is the minimum needed for the viewer to "find" the programme in what they call syndication.

The revenue generated from such long-running hit series pays the producer for his deficits, his flops, and for the development of new programmes. The viewer gets original programming on the networks with high production value as well as the opportunity to view missed episodes in syndication again and again. Lucy, Dick Van Dyke and, I'm pleased to say my wife Tracy Ullman, will live forever, performing to large audiences in syndication.

Why is there resistance to this ecologically sound recycling of our national programming? The best of our television is a national asset,



Classic case: Anthony Andrews and Jeremy Irons in the much-loved Granada production of *Brideshead Revisited*

much of which we paid for, or at least our parents paid for.

Many new operators are eager to join the Astra satellite and offer classic television channels. Unfortunately, two large libraries are controlled by the two large broadcasters, BBC and ITV.

The BBC will not sell old programmes because it is nervous of losing audience share and its claim to a national licence fee. ITV will not sell because it does not want to help a competitor who may ultimately threaten its advertising monopoly. Indeed, there are some in the new ITV system who are calling for ITV Netco-funded programmes to be held back in perpetuity.

Not only the viewers suffer from the broadcasters' attempt to slow the inevitable

multi-channel future of British television. The independent producer who creates a series, cannot profit from a successful show if there is no secondary market in Britain. A production fee is paid on bad series as well as good.

The broadcaster ends up paying more than the true cost of the programme by paying a production fee. In return, he retains the right to screen the programme in Britain, which effectively stops its re-transmission on any other channel. This in turn holds back the growth of production companies and curtails the earnings of the writers, producers, directors and actors who could earn royalties from repeats.

So, there will be no even-

ings spent quietly watching *Hancock* at 7pm, followed by *Porridge*, then *Auf Wiedersehen, Pet* at 8pm. *Brideshead Revisited* at 9pm, *The Raj Quartet* at 10pm and *Money Python* at 11pm. There will be no half past six date every night of the week with *On the Buses* or *Birds of a Feather*, no weekends with specials of *Civilisation* or *World in Action* historical episodes. We can see old films but not old television. It is a tragedy.

The BBC and ITV will remain our broadcasters of original programming but they must not be allowed to stop the re-transmission of old classics. Viewers want to watch their favourite shows again. Independent production companies will never

reach any financial maturity unless the home market for their successful series is allowed to flourish. Broadcasters should voluntarily enter into agreement giving up their domestic rights after two runs. The broadcasters' current philosophy is as outdated as stopping films from being shown on video and as ridiculous as Ford insisting that nobody can buy a second-hand car.

Allan McKeown is chief executive officer of SelectTV, executive producer of four series currently airing in the UK: *Lovejoy*, *Birds of a Feather*, *Love Hurts* and *Old Boy Network*. And Stand by Your Man in the United States. Mr McKeown and SelectTV were founders of Meridian, which recently won the franchise for the South and Southeast of England and begins transmission next January.

Celebrating good fortune

British Sky Broadcasting has beaten forecasts by reporting an operating profit despite its debt burden

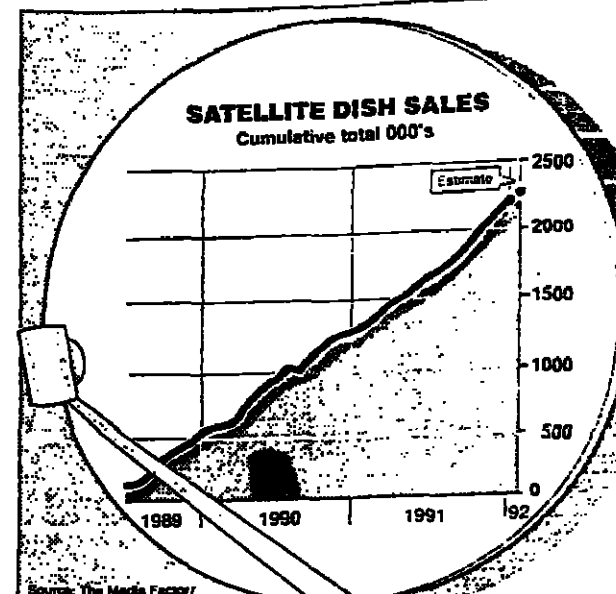
Just as a £3 million lottery win transforms the lives of the Taylor family on Sky One's "steamy new Aussie adult soap", shareholders of British Sky Broadcasting, who gambled £1.5 billion on the six-channel satellite service, are celebrating their own good fortune.

BSkyB has achieved a small operating profit almost a year ahead of its original forecasts. Seventeen per cent of the population is now tuning in for World Cup cricket, Hollywood blockbuster films, 24-hour news, old comedy classics and entertainment like *Studs*, its new "outrageously raunchy" dating game, which "dares to tread where no relationship game has gone before".

Before combined losses of £10 million a week dictated the merger of Sky Television and British Satellite Broadcasting 16 months ago, few media pundits or City investment analysts were prepared to risk their reputations singling satellite's praises. On Monday, when BSkyB revealed weekly operating profits of £100,000, executives were treating themselves to the proverbial last laugh.

BSkyB now reaches 2.9 million British homes, with 78,000 satellite dishes sold in February. Another 26,000 dishes have since been sold because of BSkyB's success in outbidding the BBC for exclusive rights to the cricket in Australia and New Zealand. With the chance that England will make it to the March 25 final, BSkyB is expecting another rush of dish sales.

Before the cricket coup, BSkyB reached 2.87 million British homes, 73 per cent of which had bought satellite dishes. Within the next three years, between six and seven million more homes are expected to subscribe, according to several independent forecasts. Continental Research expects a total of eight million homes (36 per cent)



to be hooked up by 1995. Morgan Stanley and Saatchi & Saatchi forecast respectively, 8.5 million homes (38 per cent) and 9.2 million homes (41 per cent).

Viewing figures are also encouraging, despite persistent criticism for cheap Australian and American programming. Broadcasting Audience Research Board (Barb) research shows that BSkyB gets 31.7 per cent of the viewing in homes with dishes or cable, compared to ITV and Channel 4's combined share of 32.6 per cent and the BBC's share of just 27.3 per cent.

The next two years of instability for both ITV and the BBC represents an enormous opportunity for Sky," says Gary Davey, the deputy chief executive. Keen to counter the widespread perception that satellite TV is necessarily downmarket, Mr Davey points out that 13 per cent of Sky's viewers are ABCs in line with the broadcasting average. In addition, 21 per cent of Sky's viewers are aged 16 to 34.

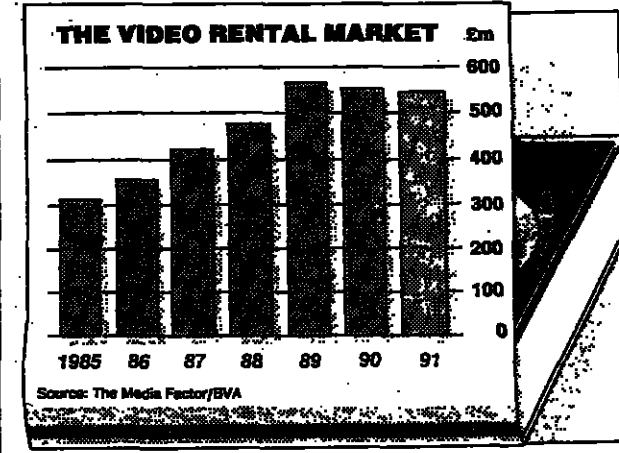
Britain's largest advertisers, including Unilever, Procter & Gamble and Halifax, have been quick to recognise this. They are taking advantage of advertising rates 20 per cent lower than ITV's. Tony Vickers, group sales and marketing director, says Sky earns £1 million a week in advertising revenue.

Subscription revenue has reached £3.8 million a week, and BSkyB has been encouraged by the fact that 80 per cent of its new subscribers are taking both scrambled movie channels. Even a significant price rise for the Movie Channel and Sky Movies Plus has not dented viewer loyalty: only 1 per cent of Sky's subscribers cancelled when the price of one channel rose by 20 per cent to £11.99 and the price of both channels rose by 13 per cent to £16.99.

Mr Davey has promised that as profits increase, BSkyB will start spending money on original British drama and comedy. He would not specify, however, when that might be. BSkyB's main shareholders — News International, which publishes *The Times*, Pearson, Granada and Chargeurs — are still owed £1.28 billion. Interest on this is £2.8 million a week. But City analysts are predicting annual operating profits of £50 million by next year.

As the number of viewers grows, however, executives are pondering a possible re-examination of cross-media ownership laws that allow News International its 50 per cent stake in BSkyB. Labour has pledged a Monopolies and Mergers Commission referral, while the Tories have said that they will rethink the laws when BSkyB's viewers number four million.

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Continued on page 8

rating
fortune

Honest images beat donor fatigue

The weak black hand of an emaciated child resting in the palm of a strong white hand contains a hidden, yet powerful, message. Photographs of a helpless, undeveloped Africa have long been used to evoke the pity of a paternalistic developed world by aid agencies trying to help.

Yet these stereotypical images often belittle and offend the very people that the millions of pounds raised each year by Britain's relief agencies and charities are intended to help.

Advertisements portraying individual white aid workers as saviours of a helpless African community belie the fact that the overwhelming number of aid workers are black Africans. The central role that African villagers play in the improvement of their own lives is rarely, if ever, acknowledged by Western charity advertisements, newspapers or television newscasts.

Moreover, photographs of starving children no longer have the power they once had. Twenty years of seeing the same images are discouraging potential donors, who increasingly feel their money is having little effect.

British aid agencies are now reviewing their advertising practices. Save the Children this month became the first British charity to issue guidelines to its staff in an effort to combat stereotypical and inaccurate images in its advertising campaigns.

"Most of our aid workers are local people, not expats. We stress local people's part in responding to famine," says Don Redding, Save the Children's spokesman. "Images of strong, active and dynamic white aid workers contrasted with helpless, apathetic and miserable Africans are inaccurate. It made us look at whether we were working in line with our own values."

The guidelines show how photographers and camera crews manipulate images of Africans. In one example, a Western cameraman is photographed filming a starving black child, who has been deliberately separated from his

Hackneyed images of starving children can be counter-productive as well as inaccurate.

Melinda Wittstock and Michael Dynes look at aid agencies' efforts to improve



New tone: agencies are avoiding images which deliberately shock

mother and placed on his own on a barren landscape specifically to highlight his vulnerability. "Situations like this, where a child has been put on display, rob the subject of dignity and humanity. When the medium becomes more important than the subject, it can undermine or distort a person or a situation and deliver the wrong message," the guidelines say.

Similarly, a photograph of an isolated Vietnamese infant made her look lost and vulnerable. But the guidelines show how the photograph had been cropped, cutting out her smiling mother. "Destroying its factual accuracy," Save the Children has told its staff to avoid text and images "selected solely for shock value", as well as "patronising, mawkishly sentimental or demeaning words

or phrases". Pictures of weak, sick or dying victims of famine must not be used out of context.

A recent campaign for victims of famine in Ethiopia and Sudan utilising photographs of celebrities pledging to "skip a lunch to save a life" raised £5 million, double the amount anticipated. Research conducted by Ogilvy and Mather after the campaign showed that people were "fed up with photographs of starving children," Mr Redding says.

Pictures of distended bellies stress the urgency of need, but that is not a strong motivation for potential donors because the African famine no longer comes as a surprise, Ogilvy and Mather said. On the other hand, a campaign which assumed Britons already understood the need and focused

on involving people in the effort was far more effective.

Tricia Spammer of Oxfam, which has also issued internal guidelines, says: "There is a common perception among charities that they can raise more money if they use these negative images. But things have changed; people are getting tired of those images. They want to see their money put to a good use."

Both Oxfam and Save the Children say newspapers and television should also rethink the images and storylines used in reporting famines, wars and disasters. "The media have done little if anything to examine or criticise their own approach to less powerful groups of people, and charities are still faced with the necessity to work with and through a press and broadcast industry which stereotypes and degrades the people whom charities serve," Mr Redding says.

Domestic charities, particularly those helping the disabled, are also coming under pressure. The Advertising Standards Authority, which has rebuked charities for "shock tactics", says too many charities for the disabled are offending those they are trying to help.

Caroline Crawford, the ASA's spokeswoman, says: "A bone marrow charity ran what we thought was a very offensive advert which said: 'Donating bone marrow hurts like hell. Donating money is absolutely painless'. We received many complaints from parents of children needing bone marrow transplants saying that donating bone marrow was not painful and that the advert would discourage potential donors. The advert offended those it was trying to help."

The authority, however, has no guidelines in its code of practice for dealing with images from developing countries. But it does advise all charities not to offend those they are trying to help.

"Evidence is beginning to suggest that shock tactics backfire and stereotypical images of helpless, starving children just lead to donor fatigue," Ms Crawford says.



Shifting attitudes: Save the Children's guidelines throw doubt on the value of images such as this

Comedy must be more than funny to attract future audiences

Television comedy, like nostalgia, is doomed for ever to be not what it was. In the popular consciousness, new programmes never quite reach the heights of *Fawlty Towers*, *Morecambe and Wise* or just about anything that Frank Muir introduced in Channel 4's Saturday *TV Heaven* retrospectives.

"Great comedy is like great pop music," Laurence Marks, one half of comedy writing team Marks and Gran which has recently produced *Love Hurts*, *So You Think You've Got Troubles*, and *The New Statesman*, says. "You can always remember where you were and what you were doing when the programmes were on."

With the retirement this summer of Robin Nash, the BBC's head of comedy, one of the most important power bases in British comedy is up for grabs. "It is the most important job in British television," Mr Marks says. "Comedy is the making of television, get it right and the evening works. When our *Birds of a Feather* was switched from a Monday night to Saturday evenings for BBC against ITV. Catch them early, it seems, and the night is yours."

The appointment is important, but the job is not now as powerful as it once was. These days both Jonathan Powell and Alan Yentob, controllers respectively of BBC1 and BBC2, often commission new programmes themselves.

"I'm not sure that it isn't two jobs these days," Seamus Cassidy, commissioning editor for entertainment at C4 says. "BBC1 and BBC2 are making such different comedy — no longer the simple alternative versus mainstream — and BBC2 is now very innovative."

The problem for the BBC is that any successful, talented, young comedy director would take such

Serious funny business



Stephen Fry: part of comedy's bright new breed

an enormous cut in salary to take the job. "My shortlist would be Richard Curtis, John Lloyd, Humphrey Barclay, Vernon Lawrence and Maurice Gran, but I don't think any of them would take the job," Mr Marks says. The good ones are probably earning more than £100,000 a year with their commercial output and independent commissions. Most are said to have been offered the BBC position and declined.

The role is a double-edged sword, John Howard Davies, of Thames Television, says. For seven years, he ran the BBC's comedy department and commissioned shows such as *Yes Minister*, *Bread*, and *To the Manor Born*. "You are caught between the hammer of the public and the anvil of the controller. When a show is successful the actors and

writers get the credit, when it stinks they blame you."

Mr Gran says that television comedy also suffers from snobbery both within the Corporation and outside. He cites last weekend's *Did You See?* on BBC2. "It angers me to hear the flippancy with which comedy is quickly derided, we had Edna Hensley talking about Mulberry [BBC1's new Monday night comedy written by *The Good Life* team Esmond and Larbey] for a moment, and then we were off on to hours of *The Camomile Lawn*, just because it has Sir Peter Hall directing."

The biggest difficulty in largely conservative mainstream scheduling is tolerance, something which Mr Davies says that ITV, driven by its advertising needs, is bad at. "It took two series of *The Good Life* before it really took off," he says, in a reminder that audience loyalty has to be won.

"Robin Nash told me that he had 22 new series out, last year, that's a fabulous amount, but I don't see too many new names," Mr Cassidy says, "but to give him his due, he is one of the few from his generation I see going to lousy clubs to hear comedians during the Edinburgh Festival."

So what is the future? "If I knew I wouldn't be a comedy writer, I'd be God," Mr Gran says. "All I know is that the next generation of John O'Sullivan and Clement and La Frenay's must be found."

Mr Cassidy says: "They should turn BBC radio much more into an apprenticeship for television, but making sure that when the switch is made it is innovative. There's nothing that the *Mary Whitehouse Experience* is doing that wasn't done by *Who Dares Wins* seven or eight years ago."

ROBIN HUNT

A bit of fun on the side

Many British readers take more than one newspaper a day, and their support helps keep the market healthy

On average, more than 14 million national newspapers are sold each day and more than 16 million papers each Sunday. Yet the national enthusiasm of the British public for their newspapers is shown not only by the sheer volume sold but also by the number of different newspapers an "average reader" will look at during the day.

Latest figures released by the National Readership Survey over the whole of 1991 demonstrate this duplication between different titles on an average day, proving that despite the recession many people are still reading more than one newspaper.

"Duplicate" readership is affected by the work or home environment in which the newspaper is read, and the relationship between a publication and its readers. On average, men are more likely to read more than one title than women, while business people will read both for work and for pleasure.

The "workplace" nature of popular newspapers is such that on an average day about a quarter of *The Sun* readers will also read the *Daily Mirror*, and 30 per cent vice-versa, while more than half

WHERE READERS SEEK THEIR SECOND OPINIONS

	Sun	Mirror	Mail	Exps	Star	Telph	Today	Guardn	Indpnt	Times	FT	None in group
The Sun	—	24	8	6	14	3	5	1	1	1	1	55
Daily Mirror	30	—	8	8	13	3	6	2	2	2	1	56
Daily Mail	18	15	—	11	6	7	6	3	3	4	3	60
Daily Express	17	18	13	—	8	7	6	3	3	3	2	59
Daily Star	52	40	11	10	—	4	12	2	2	2	1	29
Daily Telegraph	11	9	13	10	4	—	3	5	7	8	7	60
Today	37	33	19	16	22	6	—	5	5	4	4	36
The Guardian	10	13	12	9	4	10	6	—	15	11	7	60
Independent	13	13	14	11	5	16	6	16	—	13	12	50
The Times	12	13	15	12	4	19	6	13	14	—	18	47
Financial Times	17	12	21	13	5	28	8	12	19	28	—	26

* Source: NRS (Jan–Dec 1991)

* Source: NRS (Jan-Dec 1991)

the *Daily Star* more than transient readers will also read *The Sun*. Among business people, three-quarters of *Financial Times* readers read another daily — most probably *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, or the *Daily Mail* — but more than a sixth also seek an alternative to the minutiae of the stock market in the comforting pages of *The Sun*.

Among readers of *The Times*, one in eight or more will also read *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, the *Daily Mail*, the *Daily Express*, *The Sun*, or the *Daily Mirror*.

The picture is similar for the other qualities, although *The Daily Telegraph's* older readers tend to be more set in their ways. As might be expected, readers of mid-market titles such as the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Express* (especially their women readers) tend not to aspire so much to a heavier read, but may be tempted by the other title or a more popular paper.

Sunday has traditionally been a day for reading several newspapers, and more than half the readers of any title will also read another, mixing serious news with fun and sport.

The huge *News of the World*, with easily more readers than any other daily or Sunday paper, is read by more than a sixth of the readers of *The Sunday Times*, *The Sunday Telegraph*, *The Independent on Sunday*, or *Observer*, more than a fifth of readers of the *Mail on Sunday* or *Sunday Express*, or even higher proportions among readers of other titles.

The *Sunday Times* also proves essential reading for at least one in seven readers of the *Mail on Sunday* or the *Sunday Express*, and more than a quarter of *Observer*, *The Sunday Telegraph* and *The Independent on Sunday* readers.

There is, of course, a not unexpected relationship between daily newspapers and their sister Sunday titles. Sixty-five per cent of *The Sun* readers read the *News of the World*; 58 per cent of *Daily Mirror* readers read the *Sunday Mirror*; 57 per cent of *The Times*

readers read *The Sunday Times*; 49 per cent of *Daily Mail* readers read the *Mail on Sunday*; 44 per cent of *Daily Express* readers read the *Sunday Express*; and 40 per cent of *The Independent* readers read *The Independent on Sunday*.

With no connection other than popular perceptions, 39 per cent of *The Guardian* readers read the *Sunday Telegraph*. The uniqueness of the British newspaper market has therefore not only supported a variety of titles which cater for a range of tastes and readership needs, but this choice and duplication between titles has also generated continuous competition and development by publishers only too aware that their readers have a proven willingness to regularly sample the products of their competitors.

DAVID BEADLE

The writer is the media development director of The Media Factor

'Info-tainment' is the Dutch elm disease of quality TV

Most politicians ignore broadcasting issues, except when they want revenge. They treat questions such as media ownership with the same indifference as freedom of speech — as a matter only of concern to professionals. No votes in it.

This cavalier approach was best seen in Mrs Thatcher's handwritten apology to Bruce Gynell when TV-am lost its franchise: she had not meant the auction to affect it. As time runs out on its franchise, TV-am announced last week it would give up generating news to concentrate on sport and entertainment.

British viewers may be forgiven if they do not notice the difference, but the gradual shift away from news and analysis and towards the dreaded word "info-tainment" means that in due course they certainly will. Focused on celebrities, crime and action, it is bright and easy to watch. It is the Dutch elm disease of quality television, and can be seen already both in America and on the Continent.

Much was made during the debate on the Broadcasting Act of the danger of the Americanisation of British broadcasting. US ownership of former ITV franchises —

and the forthcoming new network, Channel 5 was "limited" to 50 per cent. No one worried about Europe. Yet as of 1994, continental companies can take over the whole of any former ITV franchise. They can also buy into others and so dominate British television in a way not permitted to UK companies themselves.

The Europeans are already coming: this month at least one of the applicants for Channel 5 will be underwritten by Fininvest, the company of Silvio Berlusconi, one of only four media giants that dominates the continental audiovisual scene.

These giant conglomerates have reaped the whirlwind that hit continental television in the mid-1980s. After decades of state television run by political appointees, cable, satellite, and advertising have thrown continental television into turmoil. The shock of deregulation and downmarket competition in France, Spain, Italy and Germany, has led to haemorrhaging of viewers, budgets, and confidence in many established channels.

We were spared such turmoil by the way ITV and then Channel 4 slowly expanded. They took on

much of the ethos of public service television, while the BBC accepted the challenge to become popular without losing its sense of purpose. Many fear the auction and the impending takeovers by Euro-giants have disturbed this balance.

That countries such as France and Italy, which produce such polished feature films, also make so much crude television remains a European enigma. In France, the country that invented cinema verité, there is only one regular half-hour documentary slot on French television. At a recent European Broadcasting Union arts conference, a dour Italian told me that RAI2 has not made an arts programme in two years.

Not all continental television is rubbish, of course. *Heimat* and *Das Boot* were among the best work in recent television history. Most continental stations invest more in films for cinema than British broadcasters have done. France's successful cable movie channel, Canal Plus, screens some 300 films each year of which no less than half must be home-made, a huge boost to French cinema.

Defenders of change say that quality television is protected by being good business. Some Euro-

VIEWPOINT

Roger Graef



pean co-productions, such as *Traffic*, *The Managers*, Malcolm Bradbury's satire *The Gravy Train*, and *Eurocop* (seen here on C4) ranged from good to respectable. As Roberto Pace, head of the European Co-Production Association, says, they addressed an audience of 25 million Europeans, and aimed at quality. At a time when viewers are fickle for advertisers, a discerning homogeneous group of that size is an important element in the equation.

British resistance to subtitles

and the lack of interest in matters continental are perverse bulwarks against lower standards, European style. Mike Bolland, whose company Channel X is planning to bid for Channel 5 with Berlusconi money, believes his innovative programming plans will not be jeopardised. He argues it would make bad business sense to offer Euro-rubbish to viewers fiercely loyal to British programmes. He cites the fact that the top 50 shows, only *Neighbours* (Australian), and *Baywatch* (US/LWT co-production) are made abroad. Signor Berlusconi's interest in Channel 5 is as an English production base. He hopes to use our skills to break into the market both here and in the lucrative US.

On paper, quality is protected because any company taking over a former ITV or Channel 5 franchise should abide by the terms of the original owner. But media tycoons play hardball that could make them difficult for the new British commercial television watchdog to control. In Italy, Signor Berlusconi has a parliamentary commission investigating the alleged misuse of his dominant market position there. He is arguing with French regula-

tors to ease their ownership rules and accept his offer to save the bankrupt network La Cinq (of which he already has 25 per cent) by offering still more popular fare.

The danger to British viewers is not just that continental tastes may be different, and that English-speaking products aimed at America may be too bland for our liking. We may find ourselves used to satisfy distant priorities and needs. Signor Berlusconi's French and Spanish stations are losing money, which may be covered by his Italian channels. He is borrowing heavily to expand and may sell broadcast holdings to reduce his debt.

Ironically, despite the ethos of the single market, all the other European Community countries have strict rules limiting invasion by would-be foreign media owners. This blocks UK companies from competing on their turf.

ITV franchise winners such as Central and Meridian say they do not fear the competition, but want a "level playing field" as regards media ownership. They promise that economies of scale gained by expansion both in the UK and

abroad would protect their commitment to quality programmes. Meridian, winner of the Southern former ITV franchise, even proposes a quota of original production for all UK broadcasters to ensure the supply of British tunes, no matter who pays the piper.

With UK film and television both starved for cash and stalled by uncertainty, the arrival of continental capital and energy may prove welcome. But the damage caused by "accountant's rule" is only beginning to be seen on our screens, as producers play safe to be cost-effective.

If those accountants live in Milan, Rome, Paris or Frankfurt, and are not accustomed to British standards of production and editorial freedom, the cultural argument to defend valuable but less popular programmes carries even less weight than it does in Manchester. That means less choice for the viewers, in whose name all this has been done.

Roger Graef is a writer and filmmaker. He has produced more than 30 co-productions, including *Inside Europe for Granada* and six other partners. He was a founding director of Channel 4.

CREATIVE MEDIA & MARKETING

Continued from page 6

A SUCCESSFUL CAREER IN COMPUTING

Highly motivated, energetic individuals needed to expand existing accounts in a lucrative market sector. Applicants should be aged 22 - 26, of graduate calibre and capable of dealing with clients at director level. Full training given. Good salary and commission package. City based.

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CONTACT: Pamela Curtis, Tel: 081 748 1414, Personnel & Training Department, 172 King Street, Manchester, LONDON W1P 6GU



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Limbo are the below the line agency of Bertie Bogie Hogarty. We are looking for a well presented, lively secretary with one year's advertising or marketing experience to work for a team of four people. If you are 20+ with 60wpm typing please write with a C.V. stating your present salary to:

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£10,750 plus perks

Leading Fashion Company seeks bright ambitious graduates with numerate degrees plus some retail experience to train in merchandising. Duties include allocating, assessing and analysing sales figures to predict future trends. Excellent prospects. Age 21-23.

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Young legal publishing company seeks highly organised person with good administrative skills to manage and develop sales options database. Good personality, telephone manner and secretarial skills (audio) also necessary. Opportunity to develop marketing side of business.

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A one-day crash course for the absolute beginner

As featured in "The Guardian", "Daily Star" and "Time Out". This unique course is held at a top London studio and places are limited. Students take away a show reel of their day's work. For more information please call

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We are the London office of an international publishing house based in Covent Garden and are looking for serious television staff - both experienced and trainees. We work in business travel, reference and consumer titles both for the UK and International markets.

We offer an excellent commission package and bonus scheme which combines to a high OTE for those with commitment.

We take our business seriously - Can you?

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£12,000

This young, successful PR Company is looking for a lively, bright secretary to join their busy team. Your flexibility and enthusiasm will be rewarded with involvement, variety and responsibility. You will need lots of personality as you liaise with the press and assist with events and presentations. If you are outgoing and friendly with 50wpm typing call Sarah Williams now on 071 225 1888.

VICTORIA WALL ASSOCIATES



ARE YOU FLUENT IN
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To work for this successful US Investment Bank you must be able to demonstrate your fluent written and oral language abilities. A minimum of 2 years secretarial experience along with a professional and hardworking attitude to your work is imperative. The opportunities are both varied and challenging with extremely good rewards. To hear more call 071-225 1888

Skills: 65wpm typing Age: 22-30

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SPECIAL LEGAL SEC
The founder partner of this well known City Law firm is seeking a very special legal sec, capable of Managing Partner level. He requires 'charm personified' with immediate presentation and speech together with the confidence to deal with his international clients in his absence. Excellent benefits available. Fax CVs please.

MAINSTREAM LEGAL TEL: 071 495 1830 FAX: 071 355 1395

PA/Office Administrator

Required for fashion company in Kew to assist MD and management team. Excellent secretarial, organisational and communication skills as well as solid admin experience essential. Key position within the company.

Salary to £17,500

Contact Beverley on 081 878 9443 or fax cv to 081 878 9456.

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PA/SECRETARIAL OPPORTUNITIES IN LONDON

PA to Chief Legal Adviser - excellent SH & DW skills combined with a calm, organised approach to working on a one-to-one basis will guarantee a varied role. Up to £17,000 + excellent basic fact gym and FSTL.

Sec/PA with good SH & DW skills to work for Chairman/MD in growing co in W1. Diary/travel and accurate typing will play an important part in this pressured role - up to £15,000.

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WE ARE CURRENTLY SEARCHING FOR LONDON'S BEST PA/SECRETARIALS TO FILL MANY OTHER INTERESTING POSITIONS - IF YOU HAVE GOOD SH, WP, OR AUDIO SKILLS WITH A SOLID SECRETARIAL BACKGROUND CALL ANAMICA OR JACKIE ON 071-551 0888.

MEDIA CAREERS

£9,500-£13,500

As a major force in Media Recruitment Christopher Keats recruits for most of the

FILM, TV, ADVERTISING, PR, MAGAZINE & BOOK

Companies in Central and Greater London. If you are seeking a media career and are prepared to use your secretarial skills in return for total involvement, responsibility and prospects, call one of our Specialist Consultants on:

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Early Bird

£12,500 + paid o/time

Up with the lark? Prestigious City bank requires a young secretary with 2 years financial/legal experience to work in a dedicated team. Providing essential backup to the trading activities, your fast typing skills and good telephone manner will be used to the full. A resilient and hardworking nature is essential as are good A/levels and knowledge of several WP packages. Age 20-25 Skills - audio/60wpm typing. Full banking benefits offered. Please telephone Victoria Herrington on 071 377 9919 for further details.

HOBSTONES

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£14,000 + BENEFITS

An unique opportunity has arisen for a senior receptionist to work for a prestigious, well established company. Previous reception experience essential plus the ability to supervise a junior. Candidates must be organised, well spoken and highly efficient. Preferred age: 25 - 40.

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PA FOR TOP MANAGEMENT TEAM

PA required for directors of new London-based Nationwide promotional event company linked to a major publishing group will need excellent secretarial skills plus readiness to take real responsibility; must also be free to travel extensively in the UK, have clean driving licence and like dogs.

CVs Please to Box No 7727

SECRETARY/PA PROFESSIONAL IN AVIATION

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Leslie & Godwin Limited is a leading firm of international Lloyd's Insurance Brokers. The Chairman and The Managing Director of our Aviation Company are currently seeking a professional SECRETARY/PA.

This challenging position offers scope for initiative and requires excellent organisational skills. Diplomacy will be an essential trait as you will be dealing with senior management and clients in the UK and overseas.

Aged 25+, you must have good shorthand, typing and word processing skills, supported by experience as a Senior Secretary. An excellent salary and benefits package will be offered.

To apply, please send your Curriculum Vitae to Gail Wallwork, Personnel Officer, Leslie & Godwin Ltd, 6 Braham St, London E1 6ED. For further information, tel 071-480 7200 ext 3373. No agencies.

We are an Equal Opportunities employer

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THE MODERN ART OF INSURANCE

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£10-12,000

Exciting opportunity to join a young and lively team of Exhibition Organisers. Ideally, this will be your first job where you will provide secretarial support, answer phones, maintain a database and generally 'muck-in' and learn the ropes in a very busy environment. You will be part of a highly successful worldwide company, working from superb offices in West London. Age 18-23. Skills 45wpm typing. Please call Caroline Tuck on 071-437 6832.

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Young Secretary

£12,000 + lots of perks

A lively team of dealers in City-based bank is looking for a confident and enthusiastic junior secretary or college leaver. Duties include arranging overseas travel and business meetings, liaising with clients, typing correspondence and taking shorthand (skills 30/60W). Age 18-23. Perks include bonus, free restaurant and superb health and sports club. Please telephone Caroline Smith on 071-377 8827 for further details.

Crone Corkill RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

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Are you looking for that important second job which will enhance your CV? We are currently recruiting talented young secretaries for a prestigious West End company. Excellent in-house training facilities, a caring attitude towards support staff and attractive benefits are offered in return for commitment and fast, accurate secretarial skills. Age 20+.

To learn more, please call Joanne on 071-434 4512.

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THE DYLEXIA INSTITUTE

A PA with excellent secretarial skills is sought by the Executive Director. Please send CV to: Jack Ellis-Martin The Dylexia Institute, 133 Gresham Road, Staines, Middx TW18 2AJ. Tel: 0784 463851

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St. James's College in Kensington offers short courses in Word Processing, Keyboarding, Shorthand on an intensive or part-time basis. Free Keyboarding Accuracy Lessons 071 373 3852 2190/5389

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Courses in March. Sign & Sound have a range of courses to suit your needs, from part time refreshers to intensive typing, shorthand and word processing courses. Call us to find out more. One year's experience advantage by calling today and saving 20% off all day & sound courses until the end of March. Call now 071 379 0681

TOP FLIGHT PA

required for secretarial/bookkeeping duties in prestigious retailing company located in Central London. The ideal applicant should be aged over 30 and have had administrative experience. Please write in the first instance to Box No 7643.

Thank You!

£9ph for every assignment

We would like to thank our temporary team for the enviable reputation they have earned throughout Central London over the past 15 years. They are professional, Director-level temps who make an immediate contribution to the companies they work for & are requested back again & again. In addition to good secretarial skills, they are also flexible & ready to roll up their sleeves if needed.

If you'd like to join a temp team where you know you'll be appreciated, positively rewarded (and thanked!) you'll need skills of 100 wpm shorthand, 60 wpm typing, 2 years' Director-level experience in central London (or a comparable capital city) & a good working knowledge of current wp systems.

We would love to hear from you, so ring us now to join the team:

Please ring Nikki or Julia on 071 434 4512

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Up to £13,000 pa. Ref: S/620

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TWO SENIOR MEDICAL SECRETARY VACANCIES

Up to £13,000 pa plus performance payments

Department of Haematology - Ref: S/617 Directorate of Renal Medicine & Transplantation - Ref: D/622

Responsible for the overall coordination and supervision of the secretarial support services to these departments. Medical secretarial training and/or experience essential plus the ability to organise and administer. Staff benefits include sports and social facilities, an interest free season ticket loan and discounted holidays.

Applications packs are available from the Human Resources Department, St Bartholomew's Hospital, London EC1 on 071 601 3550. Please quote the appropriate reference.

Applications should be returned by: 25th March 1992.

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WI LOCATION

Pring and Associates is an executive search consultancy specialising in the recruitment of senior management.

We are looking for an efficient, highly motivated with good organisational and communication skills to run our busy lives and organise office administration.

The ability to work on your own initiative is essential together with experience of word processing. Language capabilities a plus. This job would ideally suit a mature person. Excellent salary and bonus programme available.

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£11,500-£12,000 ann

Prestigious American medical firm/management company, based in a superb Mayfair office, requires an

intelligent, personable and extremely capable Receptionist/Secretary. Able to supervise the operation of the company's large centralised, you must also be self-motivated, tidy and possess excellent attention to detail. A friendly and helpful personality is vital coupled with a flexible attitude and willingness to work as part of a small cohesive team. Age range 25-30 years, typing accurate at 50 wpm, salary is £12,000 plus 20 days holiday. Call Sue Douglas (the Queen) 071 281 2292 (fax: 071 222 0671).

CVs Please to Box No 7727

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The Times Classified columns are read by well over a million of the most affluent people in the country. The following categories appear regularly and are generally accompanied by relevant editorial articles. Use the coupon (right), and find out how easy, fast and economical it is to advertise in The Times Classified. THE WORLD FAMOUS PERSONAL COLUMN, INCLUDING RENTALS, APPEARS EVERY DAY.

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Variety comes in short order

All secretaries have the personal touch, working as they do for one individual. Some, however, provide an even more special service. They are the temps who not only enjoy the variety that different bosses bring, but positively thrive on short assignments — of one week, one day or even a few hours — at very short notice.

What sort of people are they? "Professional," says Julia Stones of recruitment consultants Crone Corkill. "Adaptable," says Clea Hartsilver, who is on Crone Corkill's books. What it boils down to is that temps must be flexible in the type of work they will accept, be it conference work or routine typing. They cannot say, "I'm a senior, I won't do a day's typing," if typing is what is needed.

Flexibility also means being able to adapt to different personalities and working environments and being ready to travel to the other end of town at the drop of a hat. Temps must also possess solid skills. Anybody with a typing speed of less than 60 words a minute, 100 words a minute shorthand and without a familiarity with several word processing systems is not likely to be entrusted with short-notice or emergency assignments. Members of Crone Corkill's team must also have two years' director-level experience.

Their clients are of all kinds:

Secretaries who can be on instant call find ready work. Beryl Dixon reviews the scope

from companies covering for absence or sickness, or requiring extra help at times of peak workload, to those who request help on an ad hoc basis or would normally have a secretary at all, such as authors, freelance or self-employed individuals, or visiting business people.

The latter will normally find help through their hotel. Many large hotels in city centres or near airports, such as the London Hilton, employ their own permanent staff to help out on a temporary basis. "Guests ring the concierge who then takes them to our business centre and introduces them to the manager," a Hilton spokesman says. "The manager assigns a member of our secretarial team to work for the guest. The job could range from taking dictation to document and report-writing, taking conference minutes or translation."

Hotels which do not find it pays to run their own business centres

seek assistance through agencies specialising in short-term assignments.

Joan Edwards runs Unique Freelance Secretaries, which specialises in this type of work and gets a lot of short-notice hotel and conference-centre bookings. "I have built up contacts over the years, so porters and concierges know me and the staff I can provide. In the old days, I would send staff to airport hotels by taxi, carrying a typewriter. Now they find word processors there," she says.

"I also get regular calls from overseas businessmen who come to London perhaps twice a year and base themselves at the company flat. They think nothing of ringing from Heathrow and asking for someone to be at the flat in an hour's time."

Because of the speed with which she is asked to plug gaps, Mrs Edwards is very particular about the calibre of her freelancers. They must have excellent technical skills (speeds of at least 60/100 again) and be extremely well organised.

"I look for the sort of person who gets up in the morning and dresses as though she expects to go to work," Mrs Edwards says. "If a client phones because his PA has flu, I don't want to hear one of my people say, 'I can't be ready for an hour and a half. I want them ready in 20 minutes.'"



Dressed to fill in: Clea Hartsilver can find herself working anywhere at short notice, once attending a royal birthday banquet

Clea Hartsilver, aged 30, has previous experience at senior level in industry and advertising and has been temping for eight months.

She says: "I decided to try a new recruitment consultancy. I had been warned that they wouldn't even look at you unless you were dressed for work immediately, so I wore a suit. I was interviewed, tested and then told, 'We have

just the thing for you, starting tomorrow.' Clea was sent to work for Michael Kingshott, the chairman of Sally Line, and also the chairman of the committee organising the celebrations for the 70th birthday of the Duke of Edinburgh.

"I was assigned to help out the

three people who had been organising the event for three months, but this was the final week, when tension was mounting. I didn't see Mr Kingshott on my first day, but on the second he told me: 'OK, get yourself a dress because you are coming.'"

"It was a hectic week, working until 11 at night, arranging seating plans, answering phone queries from guests on protocol, and

on the night itself at Windsor I was assigned to act as hostess to a table of important guests. At one point Mr Kingshott looked at me and made a sign like clicking a camera. I assumed it meant, 'tell the BBC to start filming,' went outside and did so. Luckily I got it right."

Clea was then asked to help at the big party for 5,000 children on the following Sunday.

071-481 4481

CRÈME DE LA CRÈME

FAX 071-481 9313
071-782 7828

RISE ABOVE IT

We are currently seeking a young secretary who understands that with a boss who can either make or lose millions daily, he will not always be the easiest person to work for. If you feel you would enjoy the responsibility that comes with easing the pressure and you have the following skills please do not hesitate to call us for more information. 80-100 wpm, shorthand, excellent typing and presentation, good organisational ability, client liaison and communication skills. Salary level: 19K.

Call Cross Selection on 071 283 0799

CROSS
SELECTION
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

DECISIONS, DECISIONS

Not everybody knows what they want to do with the rest of their lives. The possibilities for young secretaries are endless. Taking time out to travel for instance, or study, or perhaps just something entirely different. If you do not want to be stuck in a rut, but enjoy using your shorthand and wordprocessing skills and require flexibility, whilst earning up to £9 per hour, temping for Cross Selection is probably the answer. Make a decision - Call us today!

Call Cross Selection on 071 283 0799

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MULTILINGUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Viel Spass! £16,000 - W.I.

International property company with expanding interests in Europe seeks an enthusiastic, lively, really good German secretary in a fun, busy team, you should either have a bilingual secretarial training or have lived/worked in Germany. There are lots of interesting ways you can develop this job, eventually translating correspondence & helping with research into new business leads. Part time/FP skills essential. Age 23-30. Interested?

Please contact Sandra Stewart on 071 434 4512 for an early interview.

Crone Corkill
Multilingual

SPANISH £17,000 a.s.e.

Ex opportunity for exp. mature Spanish speaking PA (mid 20's) in this multinational company. You will be required to look after 2 directors, make all travel arrangements and run the office in the directors frequent absence. WordPerfect 5.1 100/60.

SJA
Call Bob Francis
Ecco Multilingual
071-283 9148

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Italian Speaking Receptionist

Full time position in a busy office. The ideal candidate will be a native Italian speaker with excellent English skills. Experience in a receptionist role is essential. Salary £12,000 per annum. Please send CV to: 071 434 4512

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GERMAN bilingual secretary. Excellent opportunity for second job. Experience in a PA role. Salary £12,000 per annum. Please send CV to: 071 434 4512

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BI-LINGUAL SECRETARY/PA (ENGLISH/SPANISH) TO WORK WITH A SENIOR PARTNER. SOLID EXPERIENCE IN APPL. GRAPHICS ESSENTIAL PLUS ALL SECRETARIAL/PA DUTIES INCLUDING ALPH. PRODUCTION OF REPORTS AND PROPOSALS IN BOTH LANGUAGES. PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE IN MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY USEFUL. SHORTHAND NOT ESSENTIAL.

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MEDIA, FRENCH, SOUTH OF FRANCE!

You speak French fluently, have a media/advertising background and are 24-35. If, in addition, you have shorthand (80+ wpm) and are not averse to spending a month in the South of France - working incredibly hard - then call us about this temporary opportunity with a view to permanency. Wages £2500 p.w. Call Lyn Widdie on 071 439 7001

SECRETARIES PLUS

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YOUR HOME IS AT RISK IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON A MORTGAGE OR OTHER LOAN SECURED ON IT.

Eyes turn to the new East

International opportunities for British companies are being offered this weekend, Christopher Warman reports

A break in the south of France would be enticing at any time, but as an excuse for the embattled commercial property industry to escape the straitjacket of a market in recession it is irresistible.

More than 5,000 property professionals are expected to attend the third Mipim international property market in the Palais des Festivals at Cannes this weekend.

Last year the Gulf war reduced attendance, but for 1992 the number of participating companies for the four days has increased from 1,042 to 1,378, exhibiting companies are up from 241 to 360, and the exhibition area has grown by more than 20 per cent. Among the 28 countries represented, South Korea, Finland, Lithuania, Norway, Romania and Turkey are there for the first time.

Partly because of Britain's property depression, but largely because of the opportunities, the Mipim market appears to be defying the trends of falling capital values and share prices, reflecting, perhaps, the single European market and the opening up of Eastern Europe.

The former Eastern bloc is playing a greater role at Mipim, and many of the companies from Britain and elsewhere use the market to broaden their activities in

the region. This interest was indicated by a European urban development forum hosted by INTA/AVIN, the international new towns association, and supported by Britain's Commission for the New Towns.

The forum is intended to encourage the use of Western European experience and expertise in improving urban development, management and financing skills in former Eastern bloc countries. The forum will try to match Western European investment and advisory services with Eastern European urban development projects. There will be delegations from Poland, Hungary, Romania, Czechoslovakia and Lithuania.

The Hungarian developer Belvarosi Irindamoz KFT is the first Eastern European exhibitor, and the Treuband, the privatisation agency in the former East Germany, is bringing a portfolio of 10,000 properties that it hopes to market in Europe and the United States. So far 85 per cent of the enquiries for property in eastern Germany have come from within Germany.

Mipim has been the scene for several deals, Rotherham Stanhope and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development first discussed stinging the bank in



London at last year's market. The bank eventually moved into the developer's Broadgate scheme.

Also at Mipim, a merger was initiated between the UK agent Chesterton and its French counterpart Sopreco. The merged company, Chesterton Sopreco, has been appointed by Balfica, the Danish insurance group, to market the office content of its 960,000 sq ft development in Gibraltar.

The joint consultancy is marketing about 370,000 sq ft of space in European Gibraltar, which includes eight waterfront blocks due for completion in June. The comple-

tion of the scheme coincides with the introduction of new European Community tax legislation that enhances Gibraltar's present attractive offshore financial status.

Mipim's potential as a catalyst for European deals is revealed by recent research showing that 25 to 30 per cent of leading European companies have relocation or expansion plans at any time. Other than companies moving within their own national boundaries, 25 per cent were going to the UK, providing one reason why so many British companies are attending the market. About 20 per cent of

the participants will be from the UK, including developers, agents, bankers, lawyers, architects, local authorities and urban development corporations.

Jan Page, the marketing director of the Black Country Development Corporation, which attended Mipim for the first time last year, says his organisation is increasing its marketing activity multi-nationally. "We feel that Mipim is an ideal platform on which to launch our new initiatives into Europe," he says.

The increasing expansion into Europe is shown by Savills Com-

mercial, which is exhibiting at Mipim after announcing the launch of its Europe-wide association. Property Group International (PGI) brings together Aguirre Newman, of Spain, Burel, of Germany, and Dr Max Huber, representing Austria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, with Savills' existing European partners, Roca Savills in France and Sofia Savills in Portugal.

James Dean, the head of Savills' investment department, says: "Cross-border investment within Europe is increasing dramatically and PGI enables us to offer the advantages of an international network that combines a sound grasp of macroeconomic trends with solid local expertise."

Deals may be difficult to come by this year. The European property index drawn up by the agent Richard Ellis, also attending Mipim with its strengthened European business team, fell by 7 per cent in the fourth quarter of 1991 after 3.9 per cent in the third quarter. The total fall for 1991 was 18.6 per cent, indicating last year's general economic decline in Europe. At the same time gross domestic product growth was estimated at only 1.1 per cent and inflation averaged 5.8 per cent.

The decline in rental levels was largely attributable to London and Paris, whose markets account for more than 40 per cent of the index. Most other centres had stable levels, and rent increases in the fourth quarter were recorded in only Barcelona and Lisbon.

MARKET MOVES

Salvation for church

THE 19th-century parish church in Oldbury, West Midlands, has been saved from demolition by a scheme incorporating offices into the building.

The £750,000 project, funded by the Black Country Development Corporation, the Birmingham Diocesan Board of Finance and Oldbury parochial church council, has transformed the building from a church with a capacity for 1,000 into 6,600 sq ft of offices and a worship area for up to 150 people.

The developers explain the workshop area is "more in keeping with the size of Sunday congregations". Dry rot and other serious structural defects had meant the historic church faced almost certain demolition before the conversion project was devised.

On the bank

FULL planning permission has been granted for 453,000 sq ft of air-conditioned offices at Hammer-smith Embankment, one of the largest developments in west London.

This office project represents the first and second phases of the 750,000 sq ft scheme by Barclays de Zoete Wedd Property Investment Management on a site with a 300-metre frontage of the River Thames.

Although there are no immediate plans to start construction, the developer has appointed Sir Norman Foster to draw up a master plan for the whole 13.5-acre site.

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LONDON PROPERTY

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House buyer's report
In addition to the three conditions to be satisfied on the valuation, one further point arose in the case of a house or a buyer's report. That was whether a report prepared by an employee without due care and skill was a breach of contract by the employer.

His Lordship held that it was a contract between the society and the borrower that the society would procure a home buyer's report either through an employee or at the society's option through an independent valuer.

If it chose an independent valuer, then there was no separate contract between the valuer and the borrower, the society's obligation being confined to using care in the selection of the valuer.

The valuer did the work pursuant to his contract of employment and was not acting as an independent contractor to the borrower pursuant to a contract between them. In the latter case, but not the former, the society was responsible if the report was not made with due care and skill by its employee.

His Lordship did not see a relevant distinction between the provisions of a structural survey and the request of a borrower applying for a mortgage.

Accordingly, a complaint about a negligent structural survey could be investigated by the Ombudsman as long as it was done by an employee of a building society and was part of an application for a further advance.

**Solicitors: Church & Adams
Tatham & Co; Farrer & Co.**

plainant

sentenced to ten years imprisonment, concurrent on each count.

Mr Christopher Beddingfield QC and Mr Julian Shaw, instructed by the Registrar of Criminal Appeals, for the appellants P. M. Farmer for the Crown.

MR JUSTICE WATERHOUSE said that it is clear on the plain interpretation of the words of the statute that the trial judge was to act in accordance with the provisions section 2 of the 1976 Act.

There had been no unfairness in the trial.

Solicitors: CPS, North Wales

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